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and strangely moved. Not only the majestic view affected her but the knowledge that this same sea had carried off to America many relatives, only a few of whom had returned. To her the actual sight of the sea meant a new horizon; it gave her peasant world a new dimension.

For the islanders the biggest celebration of the year is Epiphany (January 6) when all of the families go down to the sea to participate in "the blessing of the water." The cross is thrown into the sea and boys dive for it, the lucky one obtaining it receiving a gift of money and considering himself fortunate for the coming year. This ceremony represents the baptism of Christ, but its performance — the contact of the cross with the water — supposedly gives the water dipped up at the ceremony a special efficacy in healing sickness. It is treasured holy water. Ethnologists tell us that this blessing of the sea dates from pre-Christian times, another indication of the hold of the sea on these island dwellers. It is still an island habit, when there are big storms at sea, to sweep the church and throw the sweepings into the sea to calm it; or the people may take oil from the lamp in the church and spread it on the water, begging the sea to quiet down.

The sea, like the mountains, has its own folklore. One of the most persistent beliefs among seamen is the presence in the deep of the sister of Alexander the Great, the Gorgon, often called the spirit of the sea.[17] This legend is beautifully told by Elias Venezis, one of Greece's outstanding writers, in his novel *Aeolia*:

> Once upon a time in the land of Greece there lived a young king, Alexander the Great. He had a sister called Gorgona. Alexander the Great traveled to distant lands, crossing many mountains and seas, and when he returned he brought back with him the water of immortality. He would have drunk it when his hour of death came, and he would never have died. He would have conquered all the strongholds of the world, and would have reigned forever. But he was not quick enough. His sister saw the water of immortality and, without knowing what it was, drank it. Then Alexander the Great was filled with rage and seized her by the hair and threw her into the sea. Ever since then the Gorgon lives in the sea. Her eyes are very round and she has snakes in her hair. Her arms are of bronze and there are golden wings on her shoulders. From her waist down she is a fish, and she is queen of all the other fish in the sea. She keeps alive the memory of the great king her brother who died when he was young and she always asks seafaring men she meets on her journeys:
>
> "Is Alexander the Great still alive?"
>
> "He is alive, and he reigns," they answer her.
>
> When she hears this, the Gorgon is filled with joy and orders the waves to let the caique pass. But if any seaman does not know this, and tells her that the king is dead, then he has nothing to hope for. The Gorgon raises a typhoon and seizes him and his caique and its crew and drags them down with her. Then she rises high onto the waves again to find another sailor who can reassure her that her brother is living, and that Alexander the Great has never died. . . .[18]

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[Winter] Peloponnesos

221 lard; we have bought our oil, our kerosene, salt; we have made *trachanas*
252 [wheat coarsely cut, cooked in milk, dried, and then recooked into a soup or porridge]; our wood is gathered for the fireplace and the oven. In winter
512 we get up before the light. The nights are long and we get our full sleep. We go to bed as soon as it darkens. The older people go to bed with the
221 chickens. For that reason we get up when it is still dark with the third
[354] crowing of the rooster, who wakes us all up. The fireplace is going night
[513] and day. In one corner sleep grandpa and grandma. In another corner the wife and husband. All around sleep the children. It is the house of the poor. The first to waken up is grandma, who puts the water on the fire for the trachanas; she next wakes grandpa and the housewife, and when the trachanas is ready we all get up. The trachanas is poured by the mother into the
264 deep soup plates and we all eat it hot around the fire. With the trachanas
[273] we eat olives, cheese, and we also drink some wine. Wine is never missing. When the children are many, the mother makes breadcrumbs, throws them into the saucepan, gives a spoon to each child and they all eat the trachanas. When the trachanas is nearly finished then it is a madhouse. The children each try to eat the biggest crumb; the crust of the trachanas is around the edges of the pan and at the bottom. Great laughter is heard when the crust is snatched away from one spoon to another.

512 The children who go to school go out to the fountain, wash a bit their
221 faces, and when they hear the bell, pick up their booksacks and go to
[515] school. Whoever's turn it is to light the stove in the school has to go before
[872] the others; each child has to take a log. Thus the stove gets fed and all the children keep warm. Those who remain in the house do the housework. The women spin, look after the animals, even weave. The men turn a little
[224] around in circles, do some small jobs and go to the shops. Whoever has a gun takes his dog and goes rabbit hunting. The children who are too small to go to school roll themselves on the floor, sit by the fire which they feed.
[861] What jobs could they do anyhow? Only damage can they do and then they
[462] are spanked. The winter is for women's tasks. Then the women have time to weave, to darn, to spin. When it rains and snows it is a calamity. Mud! Nobody can get dried out; it's nice in winter when the sun appears. Then all of us like foxes try to catch a sunny spot. There we sit and talk of our own affairs. The children play with snowballs. When the sun sets we all snuggle near the fireplace whilst others go to the shops. If anybody has a task he first finishes it and then sits down.

221 In the shops we gather and play cards. We talk to each other, we tease
796 each other, we quarrel and we shout a bit. From the cigarette smoke one cannot see another; when the *dodekaïmera* [December 25 to January 6
[517] holidays] start, the women stop weaving and the other tasks and start baking
[252] *christopsoma* [Christmas bread], ring cookies, St. Basil's cake, put the house in order, and whatever other tasks belong to the dodekaïmera. The

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Pelapannesos

[Winter]

children stop going to school and they get together to prepare for their caroling. When they have sung, then they divide what they have gathered as gifts. If it's a nice day, they play outside and go also to the flocks. The man follows his regular schedule from home to the coffeehouse. They also go to church. When the weather becomes clear, even if it's February, slowly the tasks start. One goes plowing, the other prunes, another carries fodder or wood; others plant trees. Those who need to plant vineyards start preparing the branches. The women continue weaving and darning; they still do not undertake outside jobs. They start these when the men need hands. To the shops the man will go only in the evening. There the teacher comes; they all sit together, while he reads the paper. Everybody listens but few understand. The teacher finishes with the paper, then the shopowner, not wishing to waste kerosene on a group ordering no drinks, bangs a piece of wood on a bench and turns down the light. If we haven't gone he puts it out completely. As we go out it's pitch dark. Some fall in the mud; others curse, and some go here and there. As winter comes to an end we have Carnival. Then we kill the pig, then we have our dances near the church, then we enjoy ourselves in the houses.

Spring. When spring comes other tasks start. Then women start to help outside too. They go to the gardens and plant potatoes, spring onions, beans, tomatoes and vegetable marrows, cucumbers, and so on. When some damage has been done during the winter to our hedges or homes then is the time for repairs. And when we want to build then is the time because the weather improves. The children go to school and can play their games; in spring the fireplace does not burn during daytime. We light a fire in the evening when we come back from our work and we can rest and get warmed up. The fireplace burns in the evenings up to Easter. From then onwards, summer starts. Up to Holy Tuesday we must have finished our work; on Holy Wednesday we do not work; on Holy Thursday we may do something; after that we prepare ourselves for Easter.

Then we slaughter our lambs, we hold the big dance near the church; then the girls show their beauty and their charms, and the men their manliness. During those days we also visit the chapels and, after the local mass, we start dancing. We dance and we are merry. After Easter we start our tasks in the fields and in vineyards, as we have mentioned previously. Then the women help too. And they do the same type of work as the men. If we have to leave somebody in the house it's all right. Otherwise, if the children return from school they get hold of a piece of bread and sit to eat it by themselves. You can imagine what happens. When the children are many, it's topsy-turvy; when the mother comes back in the evening she pulls her hair; she doesn't know where to start. She starts beating them and murmurs to herself. The men who like the coffeehouse go there as soon as they re-

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Peloponneses

221 512 [275] turn; some to hear some news, others to buy a cigarette. Many have their evening meals before and go afterwards.

[241] *Summer.* As soon as *Theristes* [June: the Harvester] begins we start preparing ourselves for harvesting. One looks for an extra workman, others prepare their sickles, we all mix ourselves into the harvest tasks. Nobody remains at home. The children come and help too in the carrying. During summertime school is closed. They have their examinations in the presence [876] of the entire village; they recite poems and give dramatic sketches. This is done on a Sunday after church inside the school.

[241] When we have good harvests we start threshing; then we winnow; then we sack the wheat and put it in our storerooms. The straw we carry into our storage huts. After these jobs are finished we go to the mountains to cut wood and we water the maize. During summer the big festival of St. 221 Elias takes place. All the village is in an upheaval. When we have returned • 796 from the Church of St. Elias we all start dancing and are merry. Lots of 535 people come from other villages. The musicians play all day and night. During the summer evenings under the moonlight the women gather with the girls and the children on the threshing floors, in courtyards, and wherever there is an opening. And they "nightspin." There they sing songs, tell jokes, ask riddles, say tongue twisters. The small children and girls play all kinds of games and end with dancing.

Fall. As fall starts, the big festival of Panagia, the 8th of *Trygetes* [September: the Grape Gatherer] comes. The dance and merriment last until dawn. Music does not stop for one minute. After our festival follows that 221 of Mazeika [a nearby town]. There we buy what we need: livestock, wool, 241 clothes, equipment for the house, agricultural implements, and whatever else. But in order to buy we have to sell. For that reason we sell walnuts [438] and wheat. What else can we sell? We haven't got anything. The walnuts [432] we gathered before the festival. When the festival has come to an end we start our work again. Then we gather our beans, we pick our grapes, we [273] press them, we put our wines to ferment, harvest our maize and husk it and place it in wooden cases, and we get ready to sow our wheat. We prepare our agricultural equipment and our seed and we wait for rain. When it has rained we start sowing up to Christmas. In fall also we open our wines [273] and down there in our basement a great merriment goes on.

221 82 The life in our village is all work and a hard lot. If God wants us and our animals to eat we do so; if it rains we will sow; if there is *Livas* [hot south wind] our crops are scorched; if God throws sickness on our vineyards we do not eat grapes; if the grasshopper comes we have a disaster; if we have little water during the summer our maize doesn't grow. God is regulating our lives, and if you dare so, don't believe in Him and don't

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The Annual Village Festival

The annual village festival, held on the name day of the saint for whom the local church is named, although a community event, serves also as an occasion for absent family members to return for a visit.[3] On such days literally hundreds and sometimes more than a thousand outsiders visit the village to join in the local excitement. Many families have so many guests that they hardly know where to put them all; food and drink are plentiful, and dancing is the order of the day. The local shopkeepers count heavily on this occasion to bring them out of the red, even though traveling merchants also make their appearance to take care of the swollen number of clients. The local government sees to it that these outsiders or their transactions are taxed. A relatively few attend the masses being held in the church since the festival is more secular than religious. One is impressed in talking with villagers about these festivals how frequently they stress the fact that they all "put on the best clothes and new clothes if possible" in order to make a good impression upon the visitors and other villagers as well.

Throughout Greece one can see many well-known national dances on these festival days. Most of them are round dances, with the dancers holding on to hands or wrists of those next to them. The musicians stand in the center of the circle and strike up the tune. A slow "dragging-trailing" dance is called the *syrtos;* one calling for jumping or leaping steps is a *pidictos;* and others are mixed. Many of these dances have much in common with ancient dances depicted on friezes or described in the writings of classical times.

An example of the syrtos type is the *kalamatianos,* named for the town of Kalamata in the southern Peloponnesos. Here the dancers hold each other by the wrist. The leader of the dance may break away from the circle and go through gyrations which would do credit to a professional acrobat; throughout this performance he flutters his handkerchief (the symbol of leadership), and when ready he may throw the handkerchief to his neighbor or someone else who wishes to lead the dance. The *geranos,* another syrtos dance, is supposed to have been danced by Theseus and the youths and maidens with him on Delos when he returned there after slaying the Minotaur on Crete. The movements of the dance are said to imitate the twists and turns of the labyrinth which was the lair of the mythological monster.[4]

Another syrtos dance is the *zalongos,* which commemorates the dance of the Souliote women in Epirus who, upon the defeat of their men folk in December 1803 by Ali Pasha of Ioannina, took refuge on a high and inaccessible rock situated above the river Acheron, where they began to dance and, still dancing, threw themselves over the precipice into the gap-

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Religious Holidays and Namedays

Family members, however, do not have to wait for the coming of an annual festival or fair to find an occasion for dancing or taking things easy. There are many other religious holidays calling for special observances in addition to Easter, the most important, and the Twelve Days surrounding Christmas. For example, Greek civil servants observe, with pay, approximately twenty-five holidays throughout the year, and industrial workers honor about half this number, some of them with pay. The villager, closer to the traditions for which the holidays stand, will celebrate the full twenty-five and others added for good measure.

To trace all of these holidays would call for a detailed Calendar of Customs, a list far too lengthy to be incorporated here even if one had mastered through the years the many regional variations throughout Greece.[8] What is more important is the realization that holidays do play an important part in adding rhythm and color to family and community life, as well as indicating to the farmer, whose agricultural work cycle is closely meshed with the regularly recurring holidays, that it is time for him to take up or finish some important activity.

I tend to associate each of the major Greek holidays with the particular village or city I happened to be in at the time of its observance. On one May Day, for example, I was in the heart of the Peloponnesos where groups of school children with their teachers were taking walks through the fields, an excursion-picnic. And, then, in the early afternoon to be invited to participate in the festivities at the school proved pleasant indeed. An important part of the activities was the hanging of the wreath over the door of the school, a pagan custom supposed to drive away evil.

Near Phlorina, in 1953 and again in Athens in 1955, I observed the commemoration of the holiday in honor of St. John the Baptist on June 24. This pagan midsummer festival has survived on into the present so much so that even in Athens, to say nothing of the villages, on St. John's Eve small boys light fires in the yards or streets and jump over them. One is supposed to burn all worthless things as a symbol of purification of the house and, as token of personal purification, one jumps over the fire while shouting "I leave my sins and my fleas behind me."[9] Into the same fire the peasants throw the withered May Day wreaths. This too is the evening when the girls of the village seek to learn their fortunes from the "dumb" or speechless water which a maiden or, in some places a young boy, brings from the fountain while remaining absolutely quiet despite the efforts of the bystanders to make the bearer talk. Later, each girl drops some easily identified possession into the jar which is "locked" until the next evening, thereby giving the name of *kledona* (from *kledi*, key) to this particular custom. When it is unlocked, the girls sing songs which foretell

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whom they will marry. This is done by associating the verse being sung with the girl whose forfeit is drawn from the pitcher or jar at that particular time.

To call attention, however, to the major holy days is to overlook the importance of the minor holy days in regulating much of the life of the older villager who is still apt to be tradition-bound. For example, on July 2, the Day of the Virgin the Sheafbearer, many peasants will not harvest for fear that any sheaves they would gather would be destroyed by fire; or on July 7, the Day of St. Kyriaki, peasant women in many parts of Greece will not bake bread for fear that it will be eaten by snakes; or on July 17, the Day of St. Marina, the people go to the vineyards to collect grapes. On this same day they may make a public sacrifice of a calf, letting the animal's blood run in a special ditch; they follow this sacrifice with a common meal. On July 20, the Day of the Prophet Elijah (Elias), there are also festivals and sacrifices, chiefly because so many churches are named in his honor. Some people go to worship on the mountaintops; others try to foretell the weather since Elijah is associated with rain and thunder; and still others light fires on the mountainsides or in the villages.

Thus one could run through each month. There are dates when livestock owners can begin to let their animals pasture freely in fields and vineyards (September 14), when master and servants are supposed to draw up the contract between them (October 26), when the wine cask is to be opened (November 3 or 11), when agricultural work is to be finished for the year (November 14), when the fountain is to be fed with seeds (November 21), when the icons are to be dipped into the sea (December 6).[a] Each of these dates in and of itself is perhaps not very significant, for the taboos and customs are of a relatively simple sort; but they do illustrate the rich heritage of folklore which surrounds every village, day in and day out, and which adds to the color and vividness of rural life in Greece.

These saints' days also afford the basis for the custom of observing namedays. In Greece, a person and his family pay little attention to his birthday but make much of the day of the saint whose name he bears. In Amphypolis, for instance, on a boy's nameday his parents will sacrifice a lamb. They will sing and dance and afterwards feast on the lamb because, as one village girl expressed it, "each boy belongs to a certain saint and the lamb is for the saint." Throughout Greece one visits a friend on his nameday, enjoys the good food that is served, and wishes the individual long life and happiness. In a village where there are many people named Constantine or George, people go from one party to another until they have had more than enough food and drink.

The greatest holidays of the year are Christmas and Easter, with the latter being the more important. As a matter of fact, Christmas is only one part of the so-called Twelve Days (*Dodekaemeron*) between Christmas

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Eve and Epiphany (December 24–January 6). It is preceded by a week's fast, which formerly lasted forty days, ending on Christmas Eve. Throughout much of Greece it is traditional to kill a pig for Christmas, although in many villages of Thessaly people are satisfied with fowl. Indispensable is the *Christopsoma* (Bread of Christ), a large round loaf, with a cross formed of dough in the middle and with four chestnuts on each side and a fifth in the center. This is a leavened loaf but without any sugar, although in the cities it is so highly decorated with candied fruits that it resembles a sweet loaf. Special Christmas cakes as well as a number of other dishes are also prepared for the occasion.

Christmas Eve is a time for caroling, or the *kalenda*. The carols are about the birth of Christ, the joy that is spread all over the world, "so good master give us something so that we can enjoy with ease Christmas Day." In some parts of Greece adults as well as children go caroling. In addition to triangles which they play while singing, the children may carry little paper ships or houses and lighted lanterns. The carolers in the cities receive coins or sweets, but in the villages they are content with currants and nuts. They avoid homes that are in mourning, although earlier in the day many people have probably visited the cemeteries with offerings of food for the dead.

On Christmas Day itself the more devout go to the early communion service and then on to the home of the eldest relative (if he is very poor, then to the home of the richest relative). Here, in Thessaly at least, they drink *kokorozoumo*, a boullion made from boiled chicken, lamb, and beef, to which a lemon flavoring has been added. In Macedonia, a traditional dish is *dolmades*, or stuffed pickled cabbage leaves prepared on Christmas Eve and allowed to simmer in a sauce pan on a low fire all night. The men in particular drink a great deal of liquor throughout the day and generally end up inebriated, partly because they have been to call on those named Christos or Christina and been duly treated. Christmas Day, though not a time for exchanging gifts, is a special occasion to be celebrated.

Yet throughout this whole twelve-day period many of the peasants reveal an unusual anxiety, for they believe that the Evil Eye is unusually active at this time. Windows and doors must be kept shut so that bad spirits will not bring in illnesses of any kind; furthermore, these spirits — called *kallikantzari* — are usually mischievous as well. They are supposed to be little men with goats' feet, enormous heads, and big ears; they are black, for they come down the chimney which must be kept closed. To be on the safe side, it is well to put a little sugar and a glass of water by the fireplace for them to eat and drink and thus be less inclined to do harm. Every village literally teems with stories about the kallikantzari at this time of year and details differ greatly as to their appearance and pranks. Their presence is

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considered so real that many villagers going outdoors after dark take both a light and a cross for protection. Nor should one do any washing of clothes during the Twelve Days, go to the fields to work, borrow from a neighbor, or believe in the efficacy of dreams since they will not come true at this time.[9]

After the Emmanuels have had their nameday on the twenty-sixth and the Stephens theirs on the twenty-seventh, the women start preparing the traditional New Year's Eve dishes. On the thirtieth special attention is given to the baking of the *vasilopita*, a special cake named in honor of Saint Basil (Hagios Vasilis), a very important figure. A coin has been placed in the cake, on the top of which the date of the year is written. Chestnuts and almonds are used for decorations.

On New Year's Eve, throughout the day, the children go around caroling again much as they did on Christmas Eve, but on this occasion it is St. Basil's kalenda. The children carry a highly decorated branch of the sorb-tree or sometimes the olive with which they tap people on the shoulder in order to wish them good luck during the year. In return they expect a gift such as dried fruit. The youngsters add a festive air to the day and help build up the emotional crescendo that becomes quite evident as evening approaches — everyone is anxious to find out what their luck will be for the coming year. Excitement is particularly keen around midnight with the cutting of the vasilopita; first, the head of the house cuts a piece of this cake for the Virgin, then one for the house, then one for the job that the head of the house does, then his own piece to be followed by one for his wife and each child in turn. Everyone is curious to find out in what piece the lucky coin will turn up. Should it be in the Virgin's piece, it will be placed on the household shrine, but if any member of the family finds it in his piece he feels fortunate indeed.

If the family members exchange any gifts, it is done at this special event on New Year's Eve and not at Christmas. In Northern Greece especially the villagers play cards to test their luck. If anyone loses he is apt to say, "If I lose at cards, I'll win during the year." Those who win say, "I'll be lucky."

The devout go to the New Year's Day church service at which the liturgy of St. Basil is employed, and when they come home they are careful to step into the house with their right foot; if they have brought a new icon from the church, the one carrying it will step into the house first. During the day the men pay calls on such village notables as the community president, the priest, the doctor, or the schoolteacher and are served wine with a sort of canape. The women, dressed in their very best, serve the guests. Students, soldiers, and others away from home try to get back to their village for at least a two- or three-day visit. On New Year's Day the card games are taken up again.

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The second, third, and fourth of January are ordinary working days, but on January 5 people expect a half-day off since it is Epiphany Eve, at which time children also sing the kalenda about the baptism of "the child of God." There is a five o'clock service in the morning at which occurs the first blessing of the waters. Those in attendance have brought jugs or cups for the blessed water which they take home to use in curing the sick or preventing the Evil Eye during the year. But on Epiphany itself occurs the most spectacular second blessing of the water, done in front of everybody at the church or near some body of water into which the cross is thrown. Swimmers are ready to dive in after it and struggle for its possession. The one who succeeds in gaining it is not only assured of good luck during the year but he can pass throughout the crowd and even the community to collect money from those solicited.

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On Epiphany the priest visits the homes of the parish to bless each room by sprinkling holy water there, thus guaranteeing that all kallikantzari[1] have been exorcised and chased back to their lairs beneath the earth until the next Twelve Days comes around.

789

Easter brings with it a wealth of customs, a blend of the pagan and the Christian, which are lightened by the coming of spring and the renewal of nature. Although they are "all of a piece" in the peasant mind, they can be best understood by the outsider in terms of Carnival, Lent, and Holy Week.

Carnival begins nine weeks before Easter and runs for three weeks. The second week is climaxed by Meat Sunday and the third week by Cheese Sunday. This is the time for weddings which otherwise could not take place until after Easter; this is the time for masquerades, although these are less pronounced in the villages than in the cities; this is also the time when family groups get together for little feasts before the Great Fast starts forty days before Easter. The last two Saturdays of Carnival and the first Saturday of Lent are *psychosabbata,* or memorial days for the dead. On the Thursday of the middle week of Carnival, members of the family, bringing their own food with them, gather in the home of the eldest relative to have a special meal, and on this occasion they allow some dish to scorch on the stove and smell up the house in the belief that this will bring good luck. This day is called *tsichnopempti,* since *tsichna* stands for the odor of burning flesh.

585 369 785 769 777

Meat Sunday is the eighth one before Easter (the villagers count Easter as one of the Sundays). On this day the people are supposed to start doing without meat products for the Lenten period. On the following Sunday, called Cheese Sunday, the forbidden foods are broadened to include milk products as well. This latter holiday is especially colorful in many parts of Greece, for on this day the village boys prepare piles of wood on various heights to be lit after dark. This is also the day for visiting older relatives

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1 [These are bad spirits – ANALYST]

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and godparents in order to beg their forgiveness. Before the evening meal begins the younger members of the family kneel before their parents to ask their pardon for a wrongdoing and to receive a blessing. Carnival is definitely at an end.

Over and over again I asked local informants how many of the people kept the Great Fast before Easter. In the villages the replies were often as high as 80 percent of the older people, but more and more it seems that the younger generation keeps the fast for the one week immediately following Cheese Sunday and then takes it lightly until the Holy Week just prior to Easter. The villagers do not find it hard to give up meat because they actually have little available, but they do find that doing without eggs and cheese is restrictive. The pious manage to live on vegetables, bread, olives, and fruit.

Lent gets off to a frantic start with Clean Monday (*Kathara Deftera*), which is supposedly a period of purification of body and soul. Kitchen utensils are polished until they shine, walls whitewashed to make them look like new, floors scrubbed, and everything made ready for the big holiday which is in store. Townspeople in particular spend this day with their families on a picnic, with many localities having favorite spots that may originally have had a sacred meaning.

Eight days before Easter is the Day of St. Lazarus. On its eve the young girls sing what are called Lazarus songs, and on the day itself they go visiting. They are decorated with flowers and hold palm or laurel branches in their hands. They represent the death and resurrection of Lazarus and receive presents in return for their performance. On this day, too, there are frequently dances in the village squares.

On Palm Sunday the palm or laurel branches are woven into the form of a cross, around which several folk beliefs center. For example, some villagers believe they can tell the future from the cross; and others say this palm cross can be used against the Evil Eye.

Holy Week finds the emotional build-up for Easter increasing day by day. On Monday the housewives put everything in order, particularly if bad weather previously has kept them from getting all the cleaning done. The devout go to church, usually in the evening, although a liturgy is held in the morning as well. In some villages the residents may tie rags in their front door to keep away insects. On Tuesday the people do very little regular work because, as the housewives put it, "we are getting ready for Easter." On Wednesday those attending the morning service are anointed with oil on the forehead, chin, and cheeks (sign of the cross) and, in rural areas, new yeast is prepared in the church and distributed to families for use throughout the year. On Holy Thursday everybody takes the afternoon off, "for it was on this afternoon that Christ was seized." To commemorate the crucifixion in the evening service, the priests read twelve passages from

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the Gospel and the cross is brought out to the center of the church where people can kiss it, place flowers before it, and show their sorrow over the crucifixion which has been called to their mind. Eggs are dyed red on this day, which is sometimes called Red Thursday, thus symbolizing the blood of Christ.

Good Friday is a holy day on which no one works. The women pick flowers with which to decorate the holy shroud (*Epitaphios*) or sacred icon. All day long the coffeehouses are closed and the people abstain from alcoholic drinks, olives, fish roe, or leavened bread. The evening church service lasts from eight to midnight. One of its features is the carrying of the flower-bedecked Epitaphios in a sacred funeral procession through the streets of the village. The priests in their rich robes, the altar boys, and the congregation walk solemnly as though they were actually burying their Lord. The procession goes around the church before the simulated bier is brought to rest before the church door at such a height that the worshippers can pass under it into the church, crossing themselves as they do so.

On Saturday members of the household prepare the Paschal lamb. A few attend the services from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M., but almost everybody attends the evening service. The bells summon the people at 11 P.M. and by 11:30 the congregation has gathered. At midnight, when the sacred fire supposedly descends from heaven and the glorious Easter hymn *Christos Aneste* bursts forth in joy, people hurry to light their candles, shoot off the firecrackers they have brought for the purpose, and greet each other with *Christos aneste* (Christ is risen) and expect the answer *Alethos aneste* (Risen indeed). The service may continue to daybreak, but many of the people go home much earlier, each carrying his lighted taper with him. Upon arriving at the house, the worshipper uses the taper to smudge a black cross on the lintel. In some villages it is customary earlier in the day to make a cross on the door from the blood of the Paschal lamb. Once back home, the family ends the long Lenten fast by eating the red-dyed Easter eggs and *mageirites*, a highly seasoned stew made of the lamb's visceral organs. The lamb, which has not been sufficiently roasted on the spit, is eaten later in the day, not only by the members of the family but by the many guests and relatives who have come back to the village from their homes in the city.

All of Monday and the afternoon of Tuesday following Easter are considered national holidays. By Wednesday people can get back to their regular tasks. Religious ceremonies and festivals have added a meaningful dimension to their lives and have reminded them of the long continuity which links them with their ancestors who, as they see it, became the guardians and proponents of pristine Christianity, which lives on in their own Orthodox Church.

1:Sanders Z-5H (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

own proprietors even under Ottoman rule. Also see D. Loukopoulos, *Poimenika tes Roumeles* (Pastoral Life in Roumele) (Athens, 1930).

16. Some of the references to particular villages are taken from the village studies of the Near East Foundation, the Mutual Security Administration, and the Greek Ministry of Agriculture (mimeographed, 1951, 1952).

An account of some shepherd festivals is found in an article by K. Marines, "Vlahopanegyria," *Nea Estia*, XI (1932), 586–590. Although this work deals only with the mainland of Greece, some readers interested in the islands may wish to consult the following representative studies of sheepraising there: For Chios: Philip P. Argenti and H. J. Rose, *The Folk-Lore of Chios*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Eng., 1949); G. Madias, "Oi Poimenes en Kardamylois" (Life of the Shepherds in Kardamyla-Chios), *Laographia*, VI, 225–226. For the Dodecanese: K. Doxiades and others, "Dodekanesos: Genike perigraphe" (The Dodecanese: General Description), *Ministry of Reconstruction Series*, no. 21 (Athens, 1947), 109–117; An. G. Vrontes, "E melissokomia kai to mandradorema ste Rodo" (Beekeeping and Sheepraising in Rhodes), *Laographia*, XII, 209–228. For Karpathos: M. G. Michailides-Nouaros, *Laographika symmikta Karpathou* (Folklore Miscellany for Karpathos), (Athens, vol. I, 1932; vol. II, 1934). For Lesbos: D. Ch. Eleftheriades, "Ktenotrophia" (Livestock Industry), *Lesviakon Emerologion* (Lesbian Almanac), 1950, pp. 281–282. For Skyros: Nike Perdika, *Skyros: Entyposeis kai perigraphai, historika kai laographika semeiomata, ethe kai ethima, mnemeia tou logou tou laou* (Skyros: Impressions and Descriptions, Historical and Folklore Notes, Manners and Customs, Glossary of Popular Speech) (Athens, 2 vols., 1940 and 1943 — pp. 157–165 deal with the major occupations, including that of shepherd; also see V. Antonakes, "E Poimniovoske mas" (Our Sheepraising), *Skyros*, 1948, pp. 112–114.

Chapter VII. Woman's Work Is Never Done

1. In any account of family life in Greece, some mention should be made of the family system among the Turks who live in western Thrace. When visited in 1953 and 1955, their daily lives were not too much affected by the Turkish-Greek controversy over Cyprus. Like other Greek citizens, the Turkish men must perform military service according to the law, but, since they are not considered very reliable soldiers, they are permitted to pay the fixed sum which exempts them. One of the problems in the last war was the inability of the Greek officers to command non-Greek-speaking Turks.

Much of the family life of these Turks centers about the farm and strict religious observances. To visit Turkish homes during Bairam, at the end of their month of fasting, makes one feel that he is in the interior of Turkey, although Greek place names and Greek officials bring one back to reality.

For two days at the time of Bairam the men do no work in the fields and are glad to spend leisurely hours with strangers interested in their way of life. They invite the guests to their homes which have been newly whitewashed for the holidays. The Turks remove their sandals or shoes at the bottom of the stairs leading to the main room, but non-Turkish visitors are not expected to follow this practice. There in a carpeted room the guests are seated on the few chairs, while the Turkish men squat cross-legged on the floor. A rich meal of *dolmades* (grape leaves stuffed with ground meat and rice), chunks of veal, dark bread, and a dessert of dripping sweet baklavas served with black coffee proves very filling. No women make their appearance, and men do all of the serving. Women are very much in evidence throughout the villages of western Thrace because they have many different tasks to perform, but they do manage to keep their faces partly covered by their veils when they see strangers approaching.

Marriage arrangements among the Muslims we visited are under the control of the Mufti in Xanthe. Polygyny is not very common, according to the Greek officials.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

west but on the same side of the road is Vasilika's cemetery. It is a small square area outlined by tall cypresses standing just inside the low stone wall which encloses the graves and the small church of St. Nicholas. Mass is said in this church in celebration of the birthday of its patron saint on December 6th. Sunday afternoon Easter services and funeral ceremonies are also held there.

Past the cemetery the road turns east, runs through the village, and constitutes its main street. Almost all the buildings of Vasilika are ranged for about one-fifth of a mile on both sides of this dirt road. Most of the houses are on the ridge side of the road; a single row of structures lines the field side. As one continues east on the village street and looks to the right on the field side of the road, he first sees fields and then the old school building. The next structure is the main church of the village, the church of St. Athanasius. It is the largest building in the settlement, and, like most of the others, it is constructed of field stone. Regular Sunday masses, Christmas and Easter services, baptisms, weddings, as well as the majority of saint's day and other special liturgies are conducted here by the village priest. The bell in the campanile of St. Athanasius summons the villagers to church, the children to school, and the men to an impromptu public meeting on the rare occasions when one is called to discuss village affairs. And, inevitably, the tolling of the bell announces the death of one of the villagers.

Separated from St. Athanasius by a very narrow alley stands a one-room structure which serves as the office for the village government. It now has a telephone, the only one in the village. Near the village headquarters and still on the field side of the road lives the owner of a combined store and coffeehouse. A ground-floor room of his house contains merchandise such as matches, cigarettes, lemons, salt, sugar, canned vegetables and fish, aspirin and penicillin, thread, and miscellaneous small items, while the outside space in front of the store is reserved for chairs and tables. From this coffeehouse, on the field side of the village, the rest of the structures are homes and their outbuildings, roughly in a line near the road.

Starting now at the western end of the village, and looking east at the ridge side of the road, one sees houses and their outbuildings occupying the lower third of the ridge. The uppermost group of homes were, in 1955, reed huts in which some of the shepherd families lived. Other reed huts served as storage houses. By 1961, the dwelling-huts had all been replaced by new brick houses, already wired for electricity but otherwise in various stages of completion. On the ridge side of the road the only buildings which are not exclusively used as residences are, first, another combined store and coffeehouse, which stands on the street diagonally opposite the first and is also a room in the house of its owner, and second, a nearly completed stone reservoir.

Finally, some two hundred feet past the last house and slightly up the slope, stands the small church of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, the patron saints of the village. Here the village celebrates its *paniyiri*, its patron saints' day festival, on the first of July. Mass is celebrated in the morning, and villagers from the surrounding countryside fill the small edifice to overflowing. Occasionally, other masses are said at this church in the course of the year. Except for the

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
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back, remarks that pruning is especially hard work because it is the first job in spring after the winter's rest, and usually finishes by saying, "What can we do? Wine is good, but it takes hard work."

The movement of people in and out of Vasilika is not dependent on the agricultural cycle alone. I have already mentioned the visits of vendors, traders, and government officials to the village. Each saint's day brings some visitors to Vasilika, for the men and boys of the village celebrate the birthday of the saint after whom they were named, and not their own birthdays. On St. George's Day, for example, relatives who live in surrounding villages come to visit the George in Vasilika who is kin to them. The number of the visitors on these days is thus directly related to the number of men and boys in the village who have been baptized with the name of the saint being honored. On St. John's Day, St. George's Day, and St. Constantine's Day, for example, there are many visitors to Vasilika. There is no one named Spiros or Petros in the village, so that St. Spiridon's Day and St. Peter's Day bring no visitors at all.

The periods of greatest density of population in the village are the two or three days of *paniyiri* (the patron saints' day festival), when relatives and strangers by the hundreds come to the village for the festivities, and Christmas and Easter, when those who formerly lived in Vasilika return to their *patridha* for a few days. Vasilika is least fully populated in midsummer when individuals and families attend the *paniyiria* of other villages in the region. They usually choose those villages in which they have relatives, and stay for a few days. At this season, also, some families go to watering places for a week or two, or camp on Parnassos to avoid the heat of Vasilika.

The arhythmic quality of the movement of people, animals, and vehicles through the village has been described. It now remains to say that the pace of movement is always slow even when it is most purposeful. No one strides briskly along the road or paths of the village; only children are ever seen running. The pace seems to be set by the slow walk of a loaded horse or mule or donkey. The villagers take the long leisurely strides they need to accompany these pack animals, whenever they go from place to place, even when they walk without them. Slow action is characteristic also of the performance of any task. No one is ever in a hurry. Women cook and serve with efficiency but without speed; men load a horse equally efficiently but again without speed. Their movements are controlled, and the exercise of that control gives an impression of vitality, of a tenseness which makes the slowness a sign of power and deliberation, never of lassitude or indifference.

When a visitor returns to Vasilika, he may ask, *"Ti nea?"* "What's new?" He often receives the quasi-rhyming response *"Isichia,"* "All quiet." The response means "The round of life is going on as usual. Besides, nothing much ever happens in this place, anyway." And in some sense, the villagers actually believe what they say. The village is the physical center of the lives of the inhabitants; in spite of their trips out of it, and the coming of visitors to the village, the people of Vasilika see and talk to their fellow villagers more frequently than they see and talk to nonvillagers. They even express considerable satisfaction with some of the obvious village-wide changes of the last few years

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
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into thread at home by the women. In each household the women weave the rugs that are a necessary part of a girl's trousseau with wool from their own sheep—at least as long as it lasts.

Goats are raised for their meat and, in households with young children, for their milk. Adults rarely drink the liquid milk. As a form of pasteurization, the villagers always bring the milk to a boil before serving it, and the children drink the milk while it is still warm. In the more prosperous households, the women use both sheep's and goat's milk as an ingredient for a kind of milk and egg custard pie and for a sweet milk and rice dish served with sugar and cinnamon. But these foods are in a class of special treats and are served mostly in spring and early summer when the milk supply is at its height. Goat meat, however, is often a less elegant substitute for lamb on special occasions. Kids are raised for the Christmas feast, and the measure of the success of a household's participation in the village's *paniyiri* (patron saints' day festival) is expressed by the number of animals (goats and sheep) slaughtered for the feast. The more visitors to the house, the more enjoyable the day is felt to be; the more visitors, of course, the more meat is eaten. When asked whether the *paniyiri* had been successful this year, one farmer answered, "Oh yes; we slaughtered three!"

Chickens are also an additional source of food and sometimes of income for the villagers. Families keep about a dozen fowl. They roam the house yards, (there is an effort made to keep them off the village street, and all hands join in shooing them out of the houses), and roost at night in the stone stables or in the ground-floor storeroom of the houses. The villagers like eggs, and eat them in various ways, but their production is also, of course, seasonal. The chicken is most significant for the part it plays in Greek village hospitality. The villagers will say, "Come to our house for a proper meal (*trapezi*). We'll kill a chicken for you." And that is quite literally what they do. Occasionally enough chicks survive to create a surplus from the household's point of view. Such poultry is sold to buyers who come around from the nearby towns. Chickens are rarely considered an extra source of food for ordinary household consumption.

A watchdog is a common addition to a household's collection of farm animals. The people of Vasilika believe that thievery is a constant danger to be guarded against and prefer, if possible, not to leave their household compounds totally unguarded. Whenever possible, some member of the household stays around the property even if it means sacrificing a visit to a feast at a neighboring village. If all the members of a household are out working in the fields, a dog is left at home. Ordinarily, however, dogs are tied up all day and the farmer, just before he goes to sleep, frees the dog to stand vigil through the night. Dogs are trained to bark at any unusual noise or at the approach of any person who is not a member of the household. The villagers, especially the women, are very much afraid of the dogs and consequently avoid going out at night. On one occasion, when the women and girls of the village had sat together in the church until long after dark, they set out for home with groups of neighbors clustered together, holding on to each other, walking fast, and shuddering and exclaiming with fear at the clamor made by the dogs. It should be added that in actuality, there are few thieves in the village and that the dogs rarely bite anyone.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)#3 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

the members of several farm households get supplementary income from various sources besides wage labor. Bee-keeping, for example, is becoming an increasingly popular supplementary activity. Three households have as many as a dozen hives and sell the honey. A few households raise pigeons as an extra source of food, and now and then one or two may join together to raise a pig. One farmer's son has what might be called the "fish concession" in Vasilika. He contracts to buy the fresh fish from an itinerant vendor and then sells the fish in Vasilika at a tiny profit.

The proprietorship of the coffeehouses in Vasilika enables two of Vasilika's households substantially to supplement the income which they derive from their agricultural holdings.

Two young, still unmarried girls have had training as dressmakers. One of the girls, who learned her skill in Athens, spends all her time sewing and rarely contributes to fieldwork on the farm. The second girl, who had her apprenticeship in Levadhia, works on clothes for her customers in intervals between all her field and household chores. Every woman in the village can do some sewing and several have foot-driven machines, but the two seamstresses are kept busy and add to the cash income of their households.

The traditional role of the village priest is occupied in Vasilika by a substantial farmer, with a wife, five grown children, and several grandchildren. He not only performs his regular religious duties but is also the head of the church and the few properties owned by it. He receives a small salary from the state, and also derives income from performing baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Greek Orthodox tradition requires the priest to officiate at other occasions, such as the dedication of a new home or the termination of a woman's forty days of seclusion after childbirth, and he receives small money gifts for these services. But on the tax rolls of the community the priest's occupation is listed as farmer. This is a reasonable designation because both he and his wife, natives of the village, have inherited some local lands. The priest's household, therefore, participates in the agricultural cycle common to the rest of the farmers. Although the priest now confines himself largely to supervision, if there is an unexpected need for extra labor, he tucks up his flowing robes and pitches in.

The village church organization provides for three additional salaried posts: two farmers serve as chanters and an elderly widow as sexton. Finally, the formal political organization of the village includes the position of secretary to the village council. This office is a minor civil service post which requires no qualification other than literacy, pays a small monthly stipend, and is usually held by the appointee as long as he performs his duties satisfactorily.

In all the cases just described, the supplementary activities are superimposed on the grape-wheat-cotton-tobacco farming base. The shepherds of contemporary Vasilika, however, have a significantly different round of life which there is insufficient space to discuss fully here.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

share of the land at the time of their marriage, the shares remaining for the sons will be too small to enable them to support their future wives and children, the family recognizes the problem and tries to make some adjustment that will prevent the threatened poverty. The villagers are well aware of the dangers of land fragmentation under a system of equal inheritance. The average land holding in Vasilika is already only one-third to one-fourth of what it was at the time the village was settled. Thanks to the introduction of irrigation and improvements in agricultural techniques (see Chapters 2 and 3), both the bulk of yields and the cash value of the crops in the area have increased to the point at which the farmers maintain a higher standard of living on the smaller holdings than their grandfathers did on the more extensive ones. But the process has its limits, and the future possibility of economically useless small holdings is a real hazard for Vasilika's families.

One kind of solution to its problem is for a family to try to train or educate its "surplus" sons for a nonfarming occupation; if possible, one that will send them to the towns and cities as white-collar workers or as professional men. This effort, however, is more than merely a solution to a recognized problem. Status as an urbanite has very high value for the villagers in its own right. As the previous chapter has shown, the families of Vasilika try to import urban ways into the village; their efforts to send their own sons and daughters directly into the towns and cities may now be discussed. For quite apart from the necessities of their situation, the people of Vasilika act as if they assumed that life in towns and cities is superior to life in a small village. This judgment is not based on a belief that there is necessarily greater economic well-being in the towns. On the contrary, the villagers believe it is more difficult to achieve a respectable standard in the larger centers and, indeed, that the plight of the poor is worse in the town than in the village. They say it is harder to have little when one is tempted by so much. But the villagers respect an educated man; education enables a person to pursue occupations which the villagers believe have greater prestige than farming, and the preponderance of these occupations are practiced in towns. Not only white-collar workers but also journalists, lawyers, doctors, writers, gymnasium and university professors congregate in the provincial towns and in Athens (cf. Antonakaki 1955:93). Even if a young man from Vasilika is not fortunate enough to work in one of these favored occupations—even if he is a tailor or a barber or an artisan of another type, or a small merchant—he is believed to acquire some aura of prestige simply by living in the more populous center.

The young girls of Vasilika want to marry into the towns because they are well aware of the greater physical ease and comfort available there and contrast these conditions favorably with the arduous and endless labor they are accustomed to in the village.

Still another incentive for gaining the status of a town dweller is the belief, in Vasilika, that life in town is more full of adventure and less monotonous than life in the village. Besides, the towns and Athens have crowds, and *polis cosmos* (many people) are enjoyed by the villagers for their own sake. A *paniyiri* or Easter is considered successful in proportion to the number of people

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
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the village attracts, and the villagers comment on their satisfaction at seeing some different faces.

A caveat may be in order here, however. No matter how much the villagers like the variety of life in the towns, and no matter how much they dislike the tiring and messy work on the farms, when they actually live in the village and are engaged in the work in the fields and at home, they work hard, steadily, and with a will. The people of Vasilika do not believe work is ennobling in itself; they seem to have no compulsive need to work to achieve self-respect, but they accept the need for hard labor as a means to the end of support for the family. Therefore, the villagers expect the farmer and his household to work hard and for long hours if an agricultural existence is their immediate fate, but do not condemn some farmer if he tries to arrange a different fate for his children. If he is unsuccessful, and all his sons stay on the farm, or if his daughters are married off to farmers, there is no disgrace in that either, as long as he did the best he could. And if a farmer can bequeath a good farm to any of his sons and the son manages the property skillfully, the economic success of the farm brings a measure of prestige, in Vasilika, to father and son alike.

Within the context of these values let us consider how the dowry and inheritance system functions in Vasilika. Sometimes after a farmer marries and has had at least one child, it would appear that he and his wife consider the question of how many more children it would be sensible for them to have. The parents recognize that the more children they have, the harder it will be to provide adequately for the future of each of them. Therefore, regulation of the size of families is accepted in the village as obviously prudent and sensible. The villagers explain that more children survive nowadays as a result of modern medical care, and that this obviates the need to have a large family in the hope that at least two or three of the children will reach maturity. In Vasilika, some prenatal care and confinement in one of the proprietary hospitals in Levadhia is recognized now as the safest kind of maternity care and also has the most prestige (Friedl 1958). Such care immediately increases the cost of childbirth and is a drain on the family's resources. But even those families whose babies are born at home with the aid of a traveling government-trained midwife are expected, as we have seen, to provide better food and finer clothing for their children than earlier generations provided for theirs. The added expense of rearing children has not been counterbalanced by any increase in their economic value on the farms. On the contrary, less labor is regularly needed, as Chapter 2 has shown.

The trend to smaller families seems to have started back in the 1920's. Genealogies show that the parents of the marriageable young adults of the middle and late 1950's had already limited the size of their families to a mode of four children in contrast to their parents who typically had had eight. The overt statements made by married men and women of all ages including the sixty- and seventy-year-old widows indicate that the change is deliberate and coincides with their expressed attitudes. Parents who have more children than they can adequately feed and care for are accused of behaving like animals; they

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) #3 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

school teachers in that village, and whose father had been a school official. They lived in Parori and the school teacher walked back and forth each day. He is a man much interested in improving the standard of living in the region by increased arboriculture, by the maintenance of kitchen gardens, and by the raising of rabbits, pigeons, and other fowl for food. The teacher covers the standard academic curriculum—reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history (with emphasis on the ancient and modern history of Greece), and Greek language, as well as some religion. For the most part, he uses the traditional methods of rote learnng, but occasionally he includes some material on farm practices in his lessons, and tries different teaching techniques. On one occasion he supplemented the geography lesson by having the children make in the schoolyard an earth model of the topography of the Peloponnesus. He had them bring small samples of each of the products grown in the different regions of that part of Greece to place on the appropriate spot on the model.

In 1959, there was much favorable comment in the village because the schoolteacher had succeeded in having the new school built in just four months —a very short period for construction work of that kind in the region. But the schoolteacher is always partly an outsider for Vasilika because he neither comes from nor lives in the village.

The school and its teacher are a focus of interest for all village families with school-age children. Not only does the school have its obvious educational functions, but the teacher is a supplementary authority with whom parents can threaten their children, and the success of their children in school is a source of great pride to the parents.

On two occasions in the course of the year the school becomes a focus of interest for the entire village. The first of these is *Ochi* Day (the 28th of October), when the school children wear the old rural costumes and declaim patriotic poems to commemorate the day in 1940 when the Greeks said "No!" to the Italian ultimatum and started to repell the Italian invasion. This is a national holiday, and the village president and the priest participate. On the *Ochi* Day that we witnessed, however, the audience for the ceremonies was small because the adults were out in the fields picking cotton.

The second occasion is the more important one, *Evangelizmos*, the Feast of the Annunciation on the 25th of March. That is the official date on which, in 1821, the start of the revolution against the Turks was proclaimed by a bishop, and it is celebrated in Vasilika by children's recitations at the church services and by a school dramatic performance afterwards. The teacher selects the playlets, which usually include several that are re-enactments of the partly legendary incidents of the revolution. After the children have performed, the young men of the village present one or two mildly bawdy skits, which derive their humor partly from the antics of the boys who are assigned female roles and wear women's clothes. After the plays, the children, still in costume, perform some of the folk dances of the region, accompanying themselves with songs. *Evangelizmos* is one of the few times in the course of the year when virtually the entire village appears at an event. Villagers of all ages and both sexes come to

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
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793 794 626 537 427 been threatened with eviction but had not responded even to this. The priest had called the men of the community together to try to get backing for his decision to evict the man. The authority was granted him on that rainy Sunday, but the shepherd finally agreed to go part way toward meeting the demand and continued to live in the house.

Religious Feast Days

796 [621] If the formal organization of church affairs involves village-wide action or concern only in times of crisis, certain feasts and ceremonies of the Greek Orthodox Church certainly provide a focus of interest for the entire village at regular intervals during the year. The most conspicuous of these is the sequence of events by which the villagers celebrate Easter. The Sunday before Lent begins is the particular day which starts the holiday observances in Vasilika. After church services, children ran about in the morning trying to throw powdered soot at each other and at unsuspecting adults. Later in the day, the children and unmarried men and women dressed in costumes in preparation for the arrival of the musicians—this time there were a clarinetist, a violinist, and the player of a *sanduri* (dulcimer). Some boys and girls dressed as animals and their trainers went around in groups trying to frighten the very small children or just laughing at their own antics. The young people dressed themselves as gypsies, and some of the boys put on women's clothes and walked around with mincing steps and female gestures, while some of the girls donned men's clothes and twirled false moustaches. Throughout the afternoon and early evening the musicians sat in the *aghora* and the young people and their elders danced in the space between the two coffeehouses, as virtually all the rest of the village population sat and watched. Some spectators sat at the coffeehouse tables drinking beer or soda; others brought chairs from home to sit along the walls of the houses near the *aghora*. Still others watched from second-story windows overlooking the area. All the spectators sat quietly and without expression. Those who danced paid the musicians and occasionally the watchers would proffer a glass of *ouzo* (anise liqueur) to the male dancers and to the musicians.

796 292 534 [535] 796 534 535 [273]

The dances themselves were the most commonly known traditional round dances of the Greek countryside: the *kalamatyanos*, *sirtos*, and *tsamikos*, danced in Vasilika by both men and women, but usually not at the same time. Men danced the *zembekikos* and the *khasapikos* as solos.

[562] [275] On this occasion, and on any other when musicians came to the village, the women of some of the more sophisticated families joined their male relatives sitting around the small coffeehouse tables.

796 [574] [484] [541] In the evening, several families joined together for a meat-eating feast, after which bonfires were lit in different sections of the village; this time the adults joined in the carnival spirit of practical jokes and danced and sang in the security of their own neighborhoods until early morning. The next day is "Clean Monday." Many of the villagers visited Kifisokhori, which has a carnival

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
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with a float competition on this day. In 1956, the winning float was a huge replica of the Trojan horse.

The events of Holy Week, with their culmination in the feasting and dancing on Easter Sunday, are from the villagers' point of view the most important time of the year. They anticipate *to Paskha* all the rest of the year; the women in particular asked about how Americans celebrated Easter more frequently than they asked about any other American custom, and whenever any general discussion of different customs came up, the women would spontaneously start describing Holy Week. Not the least of the reasons for the anticipation of Easter is that it is a spring festival and the villagers wait impatiently for spring. They look forward to the warmth of the sun after the cold and rainy winter, and they speak with affection of the beauty of the wild flowers which cover the hillsides in early spring.

During Holy Week in 1956, Maundy Thursday services began at 8:40 in the evening. Men and boys, as well as some women who rarely attended Sunday mass, appeared for the service, and on Good Friday and Easter Sunday virtually the entire village population, except for tiny infants and those who had to care for them, was present. By Thursday evening, relatives of the villagers from the surrounding villages and towns and from Athens had begun to arrive and to appear at the church. Just as on ordinary Sundays, the church filled gradually as the service progressed. Older men stood at the stalls up front, and several elderly women and pregnant women sat on chairs which were brought in for them and were placed in the back of the church in the woman's section. Women visitors were offered chairs; some accepted, some did not. Two of the village women got tired at one point and squatted on the floor, but as usual, the children, the younger men, and almost all the girls and women stood throughout. The service lasted until 11:00. In the course of it, there was considerable restlessness and low-voiced conversation among the men and giggling among the girls. But at the culmination of the service, when the image of Jesus on the Cross was brought from behind the screened altar and placed in the center of the church, there was complete quiet.

Many of the villagers can recite or chant the portions of the New Testament which are read as part of the Holy Week services, and do so under their breath—really only to themselves, since the priest and the chanters sing the chants aloud. Even among these villagers, however, very few have a literal understanding of the text, for it is in New Testament Greek, which is a generalized form of Eastern Mediterranean Greek developed in the last centuries of the pagan and early centuries of the Christian era. It is therefore about as different from the contemporary demotic Greek spoken in the village as Chaucerian English is from Modern English. Nevertheless, all the villagers know the main outlines of the New Testament depicting the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ, and know which portions are being sung and symbolically re-enacted at each of the Holy Week services.

The villagers say that on Good Friday no one should work either in the fields or in the house, but these prohibitions were not strictly adhered to. In the

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
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[Good Friday]

796 morning, small boys went from house to house crying, *"Mavros in o uranos,"* [778] "The sky is black," and they were given money or eggs. Meanwhile, the girls [788] of the village worked inside the church covering with wild flowers the sedan-chairlike wooden frame in which an oil painting of Jesus on his bier was to be carried around the village that night. The frame and the icon together are called the *epitafios*. The girls seemed thoroughly to enjoy the morning's work, and they 796 laughed, giggled, jostled each other, and called out orders. Occasionally they E-2 sang as they worked. It appeared also as if they were taking particular joy in being inside the church with no men to restrain them. They took turns sprawling over the stalls in which, as females, they rarely sat during a service. They also went up to the chanters' stand and recited some of the cantilations which were to be sung that night—the girls can follow the liturgy only silently during the [778] course of the actual service. Some of the younger girls even dared each other to go behind the panel to the altar, a place forbidden to females, but none actually did. They seemed uneasy and were even frightened at the suggestion.

796 The church bell rang at 2:20 that afternoon. The priest, with one of the 788 chanters and his son, performed the service in the course of which he brought the icon from behind the altar, covered it with a white cloth and placed it in its bower. In accordance with the symbolic re-enactment of the event, only the women and girls (and a few schoolboys) were in the church at the time. Once the icon was in place and strewn with flowers, the priest and then the children [764] went up to kiss it. The priest explained that it should be done slowly and deliberately, exactly as it was done for the dead in the village funeral rituals.

Good Friday services began that night at 9:00. At 11:00 the *epitafios* was carried out of the church by four boys. These marched in procession with the *epitafios* behind boys carrying the *lavara* (standards). Behind the *epitafios* walked the priest and the chanters. The rest of the villagers followed holding candles to light the way as the *epitafios* was carried around the entire village. As the bells of the three village churches pealed, and the children chanted *"Enas ine o theos"* and *"Panayia dhespina,"* "God is one" and "Our Lady, the All Holy One," the villagers picked their way carefully over the stones and ruts as they climbed the hillside, circled the whole settlement, and climbed down again on the other side. When the procession reached the church door once more, the boys held the bier high so that the returning congregation passed into the church under it. The service was over shortly after midnight.

796 On Holy Saturday, sweet Easter breads with red eggs inside were dis- [262] played, other eggs were dyed red, last minute finishing touches were given to Easter clothes and last house-cleaning chores were completed. Some people [461] slaughtered the Easter lamb on Saturday, others waited until Sunday. In the meantime, field chores went on as usual. Everyone rested for a few hours, from about 9:00 Saturday night until the Easter Sunday services began shortly after [788] midnight. These lasted until 4:00 in the morning, with two periods of climax. [787] The first occurred when all the lights in the church were put out and the priest kindled the new light. The boys rushed up to see who could be the first to light his own candle from that of the priest's. They said the winner would be the first of the boys to be married. The rest of the congregation then lit its

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Vasilika

candles from the priest's, or from each other's if they got impatient waiting to reach the priest. The second climax was, of course, the moment when, with the entire congregation standing outside the church, the priest announced, *"Khristos anesti,"* "Christ is risen," and the boys set off firecrackers.

After the service, people took a short nap, because by 6:00 in the morning, final preparations for Easter dinner would start. As has already been indicated, families joined with neighbors or relatives to eat the spit-roasted Easter lamb. Visiting relatives moved about to greet the villagers they knew. Baptisms, which had been arranged for the afternoon because prospective godparents enjoyed visiting the village at Easter, took place in the church, and the white baptismal clothes of the babies added sparkle to all the Easter finery. After an afternoon service in the church of St. Nicholas, the musicians came, settled in the *agbora,* and dancing began. But fewer villagers participated in either the dancing or the watching than at Carnival, because people preferred to spend more time at home with their visiting relatives. Nevertheless, a good crowd kept the *agbora* musicians occupied until eight in the evening, after which singing could be heard here and there about the village. The next day some of the young boys claimed to have been up singing half the night.

The description just given is only a brief outline of the main events and lacks many details of the village's celebration of Easter. My purpose in including it here is to illustrate the point that Carnival and Holy Week are times at which the Greek Orthodox rites and the accompanying customs provide activities in which all villagers participate at the same time and within the confines of Vasilika. Even under these circumstances, however, the visiting relatives act as a countervailing centrifugal force, pulling each family in the direction of its extra-village interests, as they use the holiday visit as an opportunity for family consultations on the problems of the coming year, and as the visitors tell of their lives in other villages, in towns, and in the cities.

Vasilika's *paniyiri,* the feast day of its patron saints, St. Cosmos and St. Damian, on the 1st of July, is another occasion when a religious event is celebrated by the entire village and draws visitors to the community. Other holy days and Sunday masses do not draw all the villagers together in the same way. School children are the most faithful communicants for regular Sunday mass; a small proportion of women and girls attend regularly, but the rest of the inhabitants appear to attend sporadically, as they please. During periods of heavy agricultural work, mass may be omitted on a Sunday. For the most part, individuals and families, rather than the village, are the units for participation in the formal religious activity of the settlement.

The Villagers as Greeks

To summarize the situation, the formal organization of the village community, the *kinotis,* provides neither autonomy in village affairs nor a unified structure. Decisions made by the village leaders are subject to approval by outside political authorities. Governmental, commercial, religious, and educa-

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V

A VILLAGE FESTIVAL

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> If any Art or Polity can be said to have place over the affection of the People, none seems more efficacious than the strict observation of the Fasts and Feasts of their Church, by which the people are taught as in a visible *Catechism* . . . more (I dare say) than by their ill-composed Sermons, or repetition of the Scripture in the Vulgar Tongue; for being severely imposed, and observed with much solemnity, they affect the Vulgar with an awe of something divine and extraordinary in them.
>
> PAUL RYCAUT

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A FEW years after the restoration of the house of Stuart to the English throne, the Archbishop of Larissa, in Thessaly, received an unexpected visitor: a certain Père Robert, *Capucin de Saint-Jaques à Paris, et Aumonier de l'Ambassadeur de France*. This reverend personage chancing to be in Larissa during Holy Week (according to the western reckoning), he attended a celebration of what, despite a certain confusedness in his account, was manifestly the liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Describing this in the journal which was his constant travelling companion during the period 1665-69, he observes that the Archbishop, when he had delivered his sermon, "went in procession about the church, accompanied by nine bishops, his suffragans". To-day, though the traveller may but rarely and with great good fortune chance upon such a mitred assembly as that which Père Robert describes, the divine liturgy is still celebrated, even in the smallest and poorest village of the Greek mountain dioceses, with something of its traditional splendour, and in such fashion as to impress upon the mind of the least sensitive of worshippers that he is a participant in no work of man's devising but in the very worship of heaven; in the praises of those who sing without ceasing to the glory of the holy and consubstantial and life-giving and undivided Trinity.

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The festival which is observed on August 15th is described in the service-books as that of the Dormition, or Falling Asleep (*Koimesis*), "of our most holy, glorious Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin

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A VILLAGE FESTIVAL

Mary". To the simple Greek, however, it is *the* feast of the *Panaghia*, which not the Marys only but also the men and boys named Panaghiotis keep as their name-day: a very much more important occasion in Greece than the mere commemoration of one's birth after the flesh. The importance of the festival is emphasised by a fast of two weeks' duration immediately preceding it.[1] The other liturgical commemorations of the *Theotokos* centre on particular events. March 25th, for example, apart from the national associations which have made it one of the greatest days of the year among Greeks, is essentially the memorial of the Annunciation: "To-day," runs the dismissal hymn, "is the chapter-head of our salvation and the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel brings the good news of grace". So with the other evangelical commemorations. The liturgy of August 15th, on the other hand, seems to sum up the whole work in the pattern of man's redemption of her who contained Him whom the heavens cannot contain, and who, through the mysterious operation of the life-giving Spirit, herself became the dwelling of the infinite Creator.

All creation rejoices in thee, thou who art highly favoured;
Both the assembly of the angels and the race of men.
O hallowed temple and logical paradise, the boast of virgins,
From whom God took flesh and became a little child,
Who is from all eternity our God.
For He made thy womb His throne
And fashioned thy body broader than the heavens.
All creation rejoices in thee, thou who art highly favoured:
Glory to thee!

*

On August 13th, 1949, furnished with a document wherein the officer commanding the Drama gendarmerie called upon all whom I should encounter in my travels to give me all conceivable manner of assistance, I embarked in the antique vehicle which then connected the village of Kato Nevrokopi with the rest of Christendom (it was blown up by a Communist mine a few months later). During the early stages of our somewhat wayward progress through the narrow streets of Drama it became evident, from the sounds which came from overhead that, in addition to the forty-four Greek passengers who occupied the

[1] [i.e. before Aug. 15th '41 - ANALYST]

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interior of the vehicle, there were others who had with less formality installed themselves amidst the multitudinous array of baggage, live-stock and firearms which renders every Greek bus incapable of passing beneath what used, in England at least, to be described as 'a low bridge'. To the north of Drama the road crosses a dusty plain for several kilometres and then turns sharply to the right between two high peaks and winds laboriously up a rocky defile. Every few hundred yards there was a bridge: either guarded by a block-house, manned by men of the mobile section of the home-guard, or else lying in ruins and necessitating a perilous descent into a dried-up water course. These occasional outposts apart, we saw no human habitation for the best part of another twenty kilometres, when we reached the head of the pass. Here we halted for a few minutes and refreshed ourselves with cold mountain water from a stream by the roadside. Shortly after three o'clock we began the descent into the well-watered plateau, within sight of the Bulgarian frontier, on the northern fringe of which lies the village of Kato Nevrokopi, and which had been the scene of bitter fighting when the Germans poured into Greece in April, 1941. A few minutes later we were among the houses of Nevrokopi and my fellow-passengers pointed out to me the cottage, in no way distinguishable from its neighbours save by the board bearing the Byzantine eagles and the inscription *ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΥΡΟΚΟΠΙΟΥ* beside the door, which, *faute de mieux*, has served as the bishop's headquarters since 1945: the old metropolis having been destroyed during the Bulgarian occupation of eastern Macedonia.

Half-past three on a warm August afternoon not being a discreet hour at which to call on a Greek bishop, I retired to the green shade of a vine beside the *plateia* to sip coffee and discuss such varied topics as the Bishop of Birmingham, Schiller and the Scottish liturgy (and, inevitably, the incredible folly of the British electorate in banishing Mr. Churchill to the opposition benches), with the commanding officer of the gendarmerie and other local celebrities. Meanwhile, a troop of small boys was despatched at regular intervals to reconnoitre in the vicinity of the metropolis. At half-past four it was reported that the windows were open (all true Greeks sleep with windows and shutters firmly closed), and I was thereupon escorted to the metropolis where I was warmly welcomed by the Bishop. We talked until a little after six o'clock, when the *ephemerios*, or curate, of the parish arrived to lead the way to church for evensong.

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A VILLAGE FESTIVAL

When the Metropolitan was suitably attired he took his silver-headed stick and we set out in a little procession towards the cathedral church of St. Demetrius, which towers above the wretched cottages that surround it like some great vessel among her attendant tugs. The Metropolitan and myself were preceded by the parish priest, while well ahead there danced a certain Anargyri, whose daily joy and responsibility it is to remove straying cattle and goats from the Bishop's path, to wave to their feet the loungers on doorsteps, the coffee drinkers and those who play *trictrac* in their leafy retreats; finally, to silence the village's solitary gramophone and other profane noises. As our little procession hove in sight, the bell-ringer, stationed among his charges at the summit of the campanile, shattered the slumbers of all who had immoderately prolonged their siesta, and we made our way up the steps into the narthex of a surprisingly lofty church.

After evensong we returned, somewhat less formally, to the Bishop's cottage for supper—a simple meal of potatoes and fruit (by reason of the fast) which was shared by his two nephews, both of them orphans. I slept that night at an inn adjoining the cottage-metropolis.

The following morning, it being Sunday, we were in church from a quarter to seven until a little after ten. The liturgy ended, the colonel in charge of the local garrison drove us out in his jeep to the village of Granitsi, high on the wooded hills above the plateau, where we sat under a great oak while the villagers came to greet their father in God and brought little gifts of fruit and honey.

At evensong in the cathedral that evening, while the cantors sang of:

> Things creeping innumerable,
> Both small and great beasts,

a dormouse appeared from behind the cupboard where the liturgical books were stored, and sat most devoutly before the beautiful doors for a considerable space. The Bishop told me afterwards that it was the first mouse—the colloquial *pontikos*, with a twinkle at my use of the classical word—he had seen in the church during the four years that had elapsed since his consecration as Metropolitan of the smallest and poorest see of Greece.

The old diocese of Nevrokopi had included 120 communities. After the first Balkan war, however, it had been partitioned, and ninety of its villages as well as the town of Nevrokopi now lie within Bulgarian

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795 territory. Kato Nevrokopi, where the Greek Metropolitan has his
648 throne, is a large village, or *comopolis* (it had a pre-war population of
[162] about 2,000 souls), about twelve kilometres from the frontier.[1/4] The
722 whole of this region was evacuated by the civilian population in
166 March, 1941, when invasion seemed imminent, most of the refugees taking shelter in Drama, some forty-five kilometres to the southward. When the Germans abandoned eastern Macedonia to the Bulgars, all who were able to do so fled to Salonica, Verroia and other towns beyond the river Strymon. It was only after the withdrawal of the Bulgars in the autumn of 1944 that the Greek population began to trickle back.
727 In 1949 no less than twelve of the thirty villages of the diocese were
[736] in ruins and uninhabited, and the number of the orphans was said to
[346] approach 900. Kato Nevrokopi itself, though it still bore traces of the great battle which had raged about the forts of the Metaxas line and their heroic defenders, had come through the years of occupation and the more recent troubles almost unscathed, save for the deliberate destruction of the metropolis and the school.

796 It had been arranged that the Metropolitan should celebrate the
[793] liturgy next morning at the village of Dasoto, four or five miles away, which would be keeping its patronal festival. The day was ushered in by bugle-calls and a great beating of drums, revealing shortly after five o'clock that the newly-formed scout troop was already abroad. These
[233] martial noises were soon mingled with the soft ringing of a multitude
[512] of bells, as the cattle were driven out through the narrow paths between the cottages to the dusty river bed where they assemble each morning
[493] before moving off to the pastures. By a little before seven it had become evident that others besides ourselves were keeping the feast at Dasoto, as a few carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes, together with some solitary riders, rattled across the bridge and headed westwards. We followed
[487] in a jeep. Our path lay through fields of maize and tall sunflowers, above which occasional glimpses of a blue and white flag of vast dimensions indicated the scouts' line of march, along tracks which a heavy shower would render impassable to anything on wheels. Dasoto
[361] came into view after a quarter of an hour; a cluster of lime-washed
[342] cottages, the church prominent amongst them, on the lower slopes of the heavily wooded heights that surround the plateau.
[793] The parish priest and some thirty or forty men and boys had come as far as the outskirts of the village to welcome us. The Bishop's vestments,

[1/4 i.e. Bulgarian frontier - ANALYST]

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and his mitre in its brass box, were borne away to the church on a flood of ragged boys, and we followed rather more sedately while the bells jangled in the tower. The Metropolitan went straight to his throne on the south side of the church after vesting in the open narthex, and I was led to the stall on his right, immediately beneath the great eikon of the Pantocrator in the dome. The church had been recently redecorated and a gay diaper pattern now covered every part of the interior that was not frescoed. Not for the first time I was struck by the contrast between the comeliness and colour of the village church and the squalid dwellings which surrounded it. The little groups of people who had followed us up the stony path from the *mesochori*, or village-square, crowded into the church, setting up their candles before the eikons of our Lord and His Mother, bringing loaves bearing the seal "Jesus Christ conquers" and wine for the offering, oil for the lamps and lists of relatives and friends, both living and departed, to be commemorated at the liturgy that morning. The parish priest came with the singers and the verger to ask the Bishop's blessing, and the morning office (the first part of which had been sung before our arrival) was taken up again.

While the Magnificat was being sung, the parish priest went all about the building censing the holy things and the holy people with a proper indiscrimination, and when the great doxology was reached the sacristan ran down the church and set the three chandeliers swinging in alarming fashion while the belfry again resounded to the clash of metal. Mattins gave place to the divine liturgy; the church became more and more crowded till the people filled the narthex and overflowed down the steps into the path outside. The scouts arrived; the chandeliers swung more slowly, scattering drops of molten wax upon the heads of the congregation and splashing the strip of brightly coloured carpet which extended from the holy table down into the midst of the church; the incense and the venerable prayers rose to heaven, and the children scrambled up the stair leading to the high pulpit or balanced on the backs of the stalls occupied by their grandfathers.

The Epistle (from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians), was read by the chief singer, or *psaltes*, a soldier from the garrison at Nevrokopi who had learned the traditional chant in some village church on Pangaion, overlooking the ruined basilica where "the saints in Christ Jesus which were in Philippi" celebrated in their day that same holy offering in which we at Dasoto were taking part. There, like the ragged boys who now pressed upon him from all sides, he had joined with slowly growing

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796 794 533 confidence in the familiar chants, had had a hand clapped precisely to his mouth when he rashly ventured upon the uncharted depths of one less familiar, and little by little had attained to his present mastery of his art. This is the universal method for training singers: the Greeks know nothing of the prolonged agony of choir-practices. As a boy gains confidence he will occasionally be permitted to sing the Epistle at the liturgy: it is by no means unusual, even in a big urban parish, to see such a 'reader'—perhaps not more than twelve or thirteen years of age.

796 The Gospel was sung from the throne—not from the pulpit—by the parish priest, and, as is customary, was followed immediately by the sermon. The men and boys parted to allow the Bishop to reach his throne, and then closed in solidly around him: a sea of intent faces stretching from the doors of the sanctuary out through the shadowed narthex into the fierce glare of sunlight beyond. The sermon, as befitted the occasion, was homely both in language and illustration. The Bishop took his text from the Gospel appointed for the feast: "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it". He pictured the two sisters: Martha, "cumbered about much serving" (a pungent sipasng reference to certain absent members of his flock who were so preoccupied with their chaffering that they could ill spare an hour or two to come to church), and Mary, who "sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word". It was well that we should hearken to the divine word; that we should come to church and hear the holy Gospels read Sunday by Sunday. It was still more to the point, however, that we should be not mere hearers of the word but doers also; that we should not only *hear* the word of God but *keep* it. Therein lay the true holiness of that other Mary, the Mother of the Word. It was on account of her entire conformity to the divine will that we venerated her, the fiery chariot of the word, the bush burning and yet unconsumed, above every creature: above the bodiless powers and the choirs of archangels, above the cherubim and seraphim who veil their faces before the unapproachable glory.

"For us too, my children", the Bishop went on, "this is the sure way of salvation. There are no bounds to the creative energy of the word in the life of the Christian who surrenders himself in simplicity to its power". A series of illustrations followed: the eunuch of Queen Candace, hearing the divine word and straightway being baptised; the converting power of the word as revealed in the life of St. Augustine —a father who figures so infrequently in the discourses of Greek prelates

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as to lead me to suspect the offering of a discreet compliment to western Christendom; the fruits of the word, love, joy and peace, made manifest in the life and death of the blessed Polycarp. 796

"And you boys", said the Bishop, with 'a diligent and busy cast of his eye' toward certain of the more youthful of his auditors; "you who steal eggs and fruit and take other people's food out of the communal oven: there is no reason why you—if you keep the word of God faithfully—should not be as great as St. Peter or St. Paul, or why at the end of your lives you should not be able to echo those ever-memorable words of Polycarp: 'These eighty and six years have I been His servant' . . ."

Looking round that crowded church, my mind went to the Whitsuntide hymn: "Blessed art thou, O Christ our God, who hast made the fishermen wise by the sending down upon them of the Holy Spirit, and through them hast drawn the world into thy net."

The sermon ended, the singers took up the solemn chant of the Hymn of the Cherubim, and a hush fell upon the congregation as the [533] ministers with their attendants emerged from the prothesis chapel and made their slow circuit of the church, the veiled oblations borne aloft, to the accompaniment of that all-embracing appeal:

> May the Lord God be mindful of us all
> in His kingdom, always, now and for ever,
> and unto the ages of ages.

The holy gifts were carried up within the sanctuary and laid upon the [782] altar. The singers resumed their interrupted hymn; the atmosphere was heavy with incense—which, say the commentators, is here an emblem of the mixture of myrrh and aloes which Nicodemus brought for the entombment of the Lord:

> Lo, Christ is crucified, the Life is buried,
> the tomb is made fast, the stone is sealed.

Two shallow alms-baskets piled high with tattered notes were passed [794] slowly round the church, while the sacristan sprinkled perfume from a pewter vessel into the outstretched hands of the more accessible among the male members of the congregation.

The long drawn-out alleluias died away into silence as the parish [788]

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796 788 priest resumed his place before the doors and took up anew the litanies which properly pertain to the deacon's liturgy:

> For the precious gifts which have been offered,
> For this holy temple, and for those who enter it in faith, reverence and the fear of God . . .

while the reiterated *Kyrie eleison* of the singers rose and fell and we commended "ourselves and one another and all our life to Christ our God".

At the cry: "The doors, the doors!" all became suddenly alert, and a young girl—one of those celebrating their name-day—pushed through the crowd of women and children who filled the space between the lectern of the singers and the eikonostasis on the north side of the church and, standing before the eikon of the Mother of God, read the Nicene Creed. The Bishop commenced the great eucharistic prayer and the climax of the liturgy drew near. After the loaves that remained over from 796 the consecrated bread had been blessed, the Bishop sent me, by the hand 778 of his assistant, a portion bearing the seal IC . XC . NI . KA: how many a 262 holy custom have we forfeited in exchanging the *artos* of scripture and primitive tradition for the *azymes* which bear no evident relation to the 783 common bread which one bakes and breaks at home, or to the daily toil of ordinary men and women. In Greece the bread and the wine [793] that are brought to the altar are the very same as those which are eaten and drunk at home, and such loaves as remain over after the distribution of the blessed bread—the *antidoron* (literally, 'instead of the gift')—go to the parish priest; so, we may recall, the English Prayer Book requires that: "the Bread be such as is usual to be eaten. . . . And if any of the Bread and Wine remain unconsecrated the Curate shall have it to his own use."

Came the solemn pronouncement of the Lord's words: "This is my body. . . . This is my blood", and the great cry "Thine of thine own we offer to thee . . ." and then the Bishop knelt before the holy table and called upon God to "send down thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these thy gifts, and make this bread the precious body of thy Christ, and that which is in this cup the precious blood of thy Christ, changing them by thy Holy Spirit", while the singers softly intoned their hymn of adoring praise, and the holy people of God stood with bowed heads in the pools of sunlight, veiled by the slowly spiralling haze of incense.

796 788 178 In some parts of Greece where movements such as the Brotherhood

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of Life have been most active, there have, as we shall see in a later chapter, been certain changes in liturgical practice during recent years: very often now the celebrant reads in an audible voice the whole of the *anaphora*, or great eucharistic prayer, which the rubric directs him to say *mystikos*—mystically, or secretly—and the whole congregation kneels at the invocation of the Holy Spirit. None of these influences had as yet reached this remote corner of New Greece, however, and the liturgy was still celebrated at Dasoto after the fashion which caused Robert de Dreux, in the seventeenth century, to observe that "it is not easy to see all that they do when they say mass, because the celebrant is hidden by a screen which shuts off the altar, and only shows himself three or four times". This, however, is a topic to which we shall have occasion to return.

The Lord's Prayer (like the Creed) was recited by a girl, and there were some thirty communicants including several children borne in the arms of their mothers—a familiar sight this in every Greek parish church. When the liturgy was ended, and the Bishop had distributed the blessed bread to the whole congregation, I observed some twenty of those who had communicated kneel before the royal doors while their father in God read a brief prayer of absolution. I have referred elsewhere to contemporary Greek practice in regard to the use of the mystery of confession. In the country districts at least, where confessors are rare, this is by no means as uniform as some are apt to suppose, or as might be inferred from the customs which obtain among the Russians of the diaspora, in Paris and elsewhere, with whom the sacrament has tended in recent times to become an obligatory part of the preparation for holy communion.

When one has fasted as a Christian one feasts as a Christian—in Greece at least.

> Then for their Festivals [says Dr. Covel] . . . there is not one that appears there but will contribute something, as his share, towards the providing of victuals and drink in abundance, (as at our old Whitsun-Ales, or setting up May-poles and the like in England) there is hardly one Greek so poor, but he will borrow, or pawn, or sell his very Cloaths, or something else, to get Money for Wine, to Celebrate the Festival; and it is the same Practice amongst them upon the Holydays set apart for the Virgin Mary, or any other

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796 peculiar Saint, especially those to whom they are particularly devoted. These jolly Easterlings, when they hear . . . that the Christians pretending to be Reformed in the West, do utterly hate and abjure all such Practices as *Heathenish* and *Prophane*, must think them all the vilest Miscreants living.

796 When the last of the *antidoron* had been distributed, Anargyri had 793 replaced the mitre in its brass box, and the Metropolitan had concluded 574 a long conversation with the churchwardens about the best method of shoring up the roof—a section of which was sagging ominously—we left the church and made our way to the dwelling of the parish priest where a vast table had been erected in the shade of a vine. There we feasted until it was high afternoon: the Lord Agathangellos, the president of the community, the *kapetanios* of the militia, the *papas*, the schoolmaster, Anargyri, the churchwardens, the singers and several officers from the garrison of Nevrokopi who had accompanied us to Dasoto that morning.

796 It was not by any means my first experience of a village festival: a 574 few months earlier I might well have been deceived into thinking that 262 the bowls of eggs, goat's milk cheese, olives, and finely-shredded 273 vegetables soaked in oil and lemon which appeared with the *ouzo* constituted the substance of the feast and not a mere *hors d'oeuvre*. Now I knew better, and I was not surprised when the clearing of the table by the *papadia* and her daughters after forty minutes proved to be no more than a prelude to a banquet of an altogether more serious character.

As the dishes came and went and the dark wine flowed freely, I recalled Dr. Covel's description of another such festival at the great Athonite house of Iveron: "The best monkish fare that could be gotten was provided, excellent fish (severall ways), oyl, salet, beanes, hortechockes, beets . . . chees, onions, garlick, olives, caveor, Pyes of herbs, φακαὶς, κτωπόδι; pepper, salt, saffron in all. At last conserved little oranges, most exquisite, good wine (a sort of small claret), and we alwayes drank most plentifully. . . . He is no Greek that cannot drink twenty or thirty plump glasses at a setting."

[535] After the feast there was dancing, and the sun was low in the west when we drove back to Nevrokopi. The day drew to a close amongst the eikons of those who had finished their course, with those yet in the way of salvation joining with one voice in the ancient canticle, *Hail! Gladdening Light*, to the praise and glory of the Holy Trinity.

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VI

HEAVEN UPON EARTH

Let the Christian consider well when he enters the church that he is entering into another heaven. That same majesty of God which is in heaven is also in His church, and on this account the Christian must needs enter with reverence and fear.

From a *Synopsis* printed at Venice in 1857

DR. COVEL, it must be confessed, looked with a somewhat jaundiced eye upon the liturgical performances of the Greeks of Constantinople—the "jolly Easterlings," as he styles them. Not for him the wondering awe of the emissaries of the Prince of Kiev who, seven centuries before his advent as chaplain to King Charles' ambassador at the Sublime Porte, had been present at a celebration of the divine liturgy of our father among the saints, John Chrysostom, in the great church of the Emperor Justinian, and had not known whether they were yet on earth or in heaven by reason of its surpassing splendour.

"A miserable Jumble, or patcht Piece of Service", says Covel, "so confused and so tedious, as it takes away all Devotion"; not to be compared with the chaste dignity of that incomparable liturgy whose compilers "with wonderful Prudence and sound Judgment did distinguish, or rather . . . garble the Offices of Greeks and Latins: and retaining and adding only such things as might promote true Piety and primitive Devotion, did cast away all the rest."

The good Doctor was plainly subject to the prejudices which are characteristic of most Frankish divines and travellers of his generation; and yet, making due allowance for a certain lack of sympathy in the face of an unfamiliar liturgical tradition, we must admit the substantial truth of his assertion that "the greatest part of the Easterlings' Oeconomy and discipline, especially of the Greeks, consist first in their Pomp and amusing Ceremonies at their Liturgies and other Offices . . . and in celebrating their Fasts and Feasts."

Nobody who has lived and worshipped amongst Greek Christians for any length of time but has sensed in some measure the extraordinary hold which the recurring cycle of the Church's liturgy has upon the piety of the common people. Nobody who has kept the great lent with

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788 the Greek Church, who has shared in the fast which lies heavy upon
796 the whole nation for forty days; who had stood for long hours, one of an innumerable multitude who crowd the tiny Byzantine churches of Athens and overflow into the streets, while the familiar pattern of God's saving economy towards man is re-presented in psalm and prophecy, in lections from the Gospel, and the matchless poetry of the canons; who has known the desolation of the holy and great Friday, when every bell in Greece tolls its lament and the body of the Saviour lies shrouded in flowers in all the village churches throughout the land; who has been present at the kindling of the new fire and tasted of the joy of a world released from the bondage of sin and death—none can have lived through all this and not have realised that for the Greek Christian the Gospel is inseparably linked with the liturgy that is unfolded week by week in his parish church. Not among the Greeks only but throughout Orthodox Christendom the liturgy has remained at the very heart of the Church's life.

What the west knows as the liturgical movement bears witness to a very different state of affairs. Throughout western Christendom we can trace the growth of a spirit profoundly alien to that which characterises the Orthodox Christian's approach to the mysteries of the faith. The prayer of the Church no longer shapes and controls the piety of ordinary men and women as it did in former days. Liturgy has as it were become separated from dogma and then, inevitably, from spirituality also. The holy eucharist—the corporate action wherein every member of the organic body has its appropriate *liturgy* to perform—has become clericalised; has come to be thought of as the act of one member acting on behalf of the whole body.

Many who reverence the Bible as the word of God forget that the treasures of the divine scriptures are fully revealed only to the worshipping *ekklesia*, in whose liturgy they are embedded as in a precious frame. Every fragment of a shattered Christendom has its private *lex orandi*, born of isolation and bearing the marks of controversies which are in their turn the legacy of schism and partial vision; while personal devotion—no longer fully subject to the control of the liturgy—has brought forth strange fruit; and a theology divorced from worship and banished to the schools has come to be regarded as a barren science of the intellect: a necessary discipline for scholars and specialists, but utterly irrelevant to the life of the ordinary Christian doing daily battle against the threefold enemy.

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788 in western Christendom. The very limitations of this Greek 'liturgical
178 movement' illustrate the Roman Catholic historian's contention that the Orthodox Church has never lost her hold upon certain important truths which we in the west are only now, after long centuries of neglect, beginning to recover and make our own.

788 The word *leitourgia* had in classical Greek the meaning of a public
796 service or duty—it might be building a wall or fitting out a hollow ship
[192] for a naval expedition. Despite the specifically religious associations which the word has acquired through later usage, it is still sometimes employed in this quite general sense. I remember, for example, being told on one occasion in a small provincial town of northern Greece that the municipal school was not *liturgising* that morning: was not performing its liturgy, or service.

For the Christian, likewise, the liturgy which he fulfils every Sunday in his parish church is a public service; an action performed on behalf not of any terrestrial *polis* but of that city which, as Augustine puts it, is Christ's body of which Christ is the head. The holy eucharist in particular, the service to which the Greek Christian commonly refers as 'the divine liturgy', and upon which the whole of the liturgy, in the wider sense of that word, centres, is supremely the characteristic act of the Church: a corporate action in which every member of the one body takes part. Nor is it those now on earth who alone participate in the eucharistic liturgy. It is not merely the bishop, priest, deacon and reader who, with the remainder of the *laos*—the holy people of God—have their peculiar service to offer within the setting of the one oblation. The saints and the angels, the many-eyed cherubim and the six-winged seraphim, no less than the earthly ministers of Christ's body have each their several liturgy to perform; the whole company of the heavenly Sion is present and active in every village church or hilltop chapel where the holy and ineffable mysteries are fulfilled and where the King of kings and Lord of lords comes forth to be sacrificed and given for food to the faithful.

For many centuries now, so far as the west is concerned, this aspect of the eucharist as the characteristic action of the whole Christian community has tended to be obscured. The passing of the austere Latin of the ancient liturgies as a language "understanded of the people" and the banishing of theology to the schools gradually brought about the virtual exclusion of the laity from any active participation in the

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celebration of the divine mysteries. The liturgy was no longer thought of as a corporate action in which the whole congregation—the laity no less than the clerks—had an essential part to play. Slowly but surely the mass came to be regarded rather in the light of a marvellous rite, fraught indeed with inexpressible wonder and mystery, performed by the sacred ministers: as something *said* rather than *done*. The common people, capable no longer of entering into the full meaning of the prayer of the Church, came to church to hear the mass and to occupy themselves with 'private' devotions bearing little relation to the action which was taking place within the sanctuary, where the sacred ministers performed their liturgy on behalf of the whole body. The ceremonies which from about the thirteenth century onwards gathered about the elevation of the holy gifts belong to an age which had already acquiesced in the growth of a popular piety no longer effectively subject to the control of the prayer of the Church.

The English Prayer Book attempted to restore to the laity their rightful liturgy. The mass was again sung that the people might hear it and in a language which they could understand. But the reformers themselves were too much subject to mediaeval assumptions: the real roots of the trouble still lay hid. An emphasis on audibility was not enough and congregational worship was not necessarily *corporate* worship. For the common people the new vernacular mass was still something said rather than done; metrical psalms and the congregational hymns which gradually superseded them, had no more organic connexion with the eucharistic action than the older vernacular devotions wherewith our forefathers had occupied themselves while the priest, aloof and apart, performed his mysterious acts at God's board.

The expression 'to hear mass' has no parallel in Greek. The Greek Christian goes to his parish church not so much to *hear* a service as to play his part in a corporate action in which all the different orders of the Church are actively involved. The very arrangement of the church emphasises this fact; the sacred ministers are not, as is now usual in the west, separated from the people by a long quire or chancel. The holy table stands not against the east wall of the apse but clear in the midst of the *altar*, or sanctuary as we should say. The average Greek church, it should also be borne in mind, is by western standards very tiny—even the great basilicas of Salonica are dwarfed by the cathedrals of the gothic north—and since the space which separates the holy table from

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788 the eikonostasis is commonly no greater than suffices to permit of the
796 prostrations of the celebrant, and, in a parish church, the laity occupy
346 the greater part of the space beneath the dome, and press against the great screen which bears the eikons, many of the congregation are thus within two or three yards of the holy table itself.

But what, the reader may ask, of the eikonostasis? Does not this solid screen, pierced only by three doors, extending right across the whole width of the church, cut off the laity from all effective participation in the action taking place within the sanctuary quite as much as mere physical remoteness? Does it not tend, as has been asserted by Dom Gregory Dix, to force "upon the eastern liturgies the character of two simultaneous services, the one proceeding outside the screen for the people, conducted chiefly by the deacon; the other—the real liturgical action—proceeding inside the screen conducted by the celebrant"?

788 That there is an element of truth in such contentions may be ad-
796 mitted: witness a tendency which is steadily gaining ground in Greece
346 to-day. In many town churches (with the exception of a few provincial
178 cathedrals liturgical reform has as yet made little headway in the country districts), the curtain which could be drawn across the space above the double doors in the centre of the eikonostasis has now fallen into disuse—at any rate so far as the eucharistic liturgy is concerned. The doors themselves are as a rule only about three feet in height, and it has long been customary to draw these curtains (thus screening the sanctuary completely from the view of the people) at two points during the divine liturgy, at both of which there is much coming and going about the holy table; at the placing of the holy gifts upon the altar immediately after the Great Entrance; and again during the communion of the ministers. This custom has now been abandoned in many places. In a few churches the doors themselves have been removed as, for instance, at Aghia Katerini, Piraeus (where the liturgy is celebrated with a reverence and propriety unsurpassed in all Greece), and, I am told, in the chapel of the Oecumenical Patriarchate at Constantinople.

788 When all is said, however, the effects of the eikonostasis have been
796 grossly exaggerated by western writers, too many of whom have been
346 content to reiterate *ad nauseam* the strictures of their predecessors in the field of controversy: strictures grounded not infrequently upon the most superficial acquaintance with the liturgical practice of eastern Christendom. The divisive properties of the eikonostasis are most marked in a large church when the space before the royal doors normally

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occupied by the laity is railed off and reserved for the singers and distinguished visitors. Such an arrangement, so far as Greece is concerned, will be found only in certain churches of Athens and Salonica. It would, I fancy, be generally acknowledged by all who have worshipped among Greek Christians as well as in the churches of the Latins that as an instrument for creating a sense of separation between ministers and people the eikonostasis of the Easterlings is vastly inferior to the Frankish quire or chancel. An Orthodox priest who has celebrated the liturgy in more than 200 western churches (most of them Anglican) has remarked that he finds himself far more cut off from his congregation in an English parish church—without an eikonostasis of course, but with a long chancel, often having a screen at its *western* end—than in an Orthodox church where the screen is never further away than four feet from the altar.

It needs also to be borne in mind how great a part of the eucharistic action is enacted *outside* the eikonostasis in the midst of the congregation. Thus the deacon, whose normal place is immediately beneath the eikon of the Pantocrator in the dome, acts as a constant link between all the various orders of the church. The bishop's throne, which forms part of the ordinary furnishing of every Greek church—a constant reminder that the parish priest 'liturgises' only as the deputy of the diocesan—also stands outside the screen, on the south side of the space beneath the dome, so that the bishop is often completely surrounded by his flock. At the solemn entries which occur during the course of the divine liturgy —the lesser, with the book of the Gospels, the greater, with the holy gifts veiled and borne aloft—the sacred ministers descend into the body of the church and make a slow circuit of the whole building. Outside the eucharistic liturgy itself, some of the most memorable events of the liturgical year—the great blessing of the waters at Epiphany (the Feast of Lights, as it is popularly known), the solemn kneeling at the second vespers of Whit-Sunday and the adoration of the holy cross on September 14th, as well as many of the profoundly moving ceremonies of Holy Week and Eastertide—are celebrated not within the sanctuary but in the midst of the congregation.

This would naturally be impossible if the Greek church were encumbered with chairs or pews. In fact, the only seating consists of a few stalls, with crutch-like supports for the arms, against the walls of the church. Standing—not kneeling—is, as it has always been, the normal attitude for prayer. At one of the great festivals the people will stand for hours wedged so tightly together that it is impossible even to cross

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788 oneself. All other considerations apart, such a setting is hardly favourable to
796 the growth of certain individualistic types of piety which flourish amongst
[346] the Franks, who worship their Creator in strange and novel ways, each isolated from his fellow and entrenched within the citadel of his own pew.

In Greece there is but one celebration of the liturgy on a Sunday or holy day in any one church. This is a rule which is waived only in cases
[346] of extreme necessity and then only when a *parekklesion*, or side-chapel,
[793] is available so that it is not necessary to use the same altar twice (most Greek churches have only one altar). A priest may celebrate only once on any given day.

In Greece the times of services are never announced and questions on this score are invariably met with evasive if not actually misleading replies. Services commence earlier in summer than in winter. An hour or two after sunrise the bells will be rung and the priest and a couple of readers will begin to sing the morning offices—*mesonyktikon* (which should, as the name indicates, be read at midnight, as it is in the monastic use), and *orthros*, or lauds, the office of the dawn. Towards the end of the latter service—perhaps an hour or more after the village's first awakening—the bells will be rung a second time. Still the church is comparatively empty. The holy eucharist follows *orthros* without a break about nine o'clock, and by the time that the thrice-holy hymn is sung (when the bells summon the faithful for the third and last time) the congregation will have begun to swell, until, at the great entry with the holy gifts, the greater part of the village will be packed within the walls of the church, the men to the right, the women to the left, the air by this time heavy with incense.

788 The whole service is invariably sung. What the west knows as a low
533 mass, the 'early service' or 'eight o'clock', dear to so many English churchmen, is unknown to the Greeks. The traditional Byzantine chant is still more or less universal and is always sung without instrumental accompaniment; only in certain urban parishes has it been partially displaced of recent years by that bastard child of strangely-matched parents, the so-called European chant. In its pure form the traditional plainsong can be quite ravishing in its unearthly beauty. Never shall I forget the singing of the monks of Moni Petraki who gather morning by morning in their tiny church, while Athens lies in darkness and before the first tramcar has gone clanging down the tree-lined avenue of the *Basilissa* Sophia towards the outer suburbs.

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"Nowhere, either in Greece or the East," observes the Abbé de St. Michon, "do men sing as loud as we do. It is an usage that we owe to the barbarism of our fathers. The oriental psalmody is sweet, low and without effort." Alas! it is not always so. "Their singing", says Thomas Smith, "is very mean and pitifull, without figure and the relishes of art, and is at best but a 'kind of harsh Plain-song." "We heard the Greek Vespers", wrote Sir George Wheler in 1675, "worse sung than *Hopkins* Psalms used to be in some of our Country Churches." All too frequently the beauty of the traditional chant has been overlaid by accretions and adornment from alien sources; and its delivery, as the Abbé justly remarks, "with nasal sounds which weary European ears". Much of the "tedious and indiscreet length of liturgies" whereof so many Frankish travellers have complained, is due not to any inner necessity of the rite itself but solely to the elaboration of the chant. The restoration of the oriental plainchant to something of its earlier simplicity and directness has therefore become an imperative need in circles where the holy mysteries are celebrated frequently: one cannot expect the laity to spend the greater part of every morning in church. There are churches in Greece to-day where the liturgy is celebrated with great reverence in an hour and a quarter, even when many of the secret prayers are read aloud.

Concelebration—which has all but disappeared from the west—is still very much a reality in Greece, and is an important factor in enabling the Greek Church to retain the ancient rule of a single eucharist attended by the whole church in each several locality. On a Sunday morning at an important parish church, such as St. Panteleimon, Acharnon (in the suburbs of Athens), one may see five or six priests attended by a deacon concelebrating at the great square altar, often with a bishop (one of the suffragans of the Archbishop, or a provincial metropolitan serving his term of duty as a member of the synod) presiding over the whole assembly. The Greek bishop or priest who finds himself away from his own diocese on the Lord's day does not take his place amongst the laity in the body of the church but joins the other ministers gathered around the holy table and there fulfils his proper liturgy.

Now there are those who, while recognising that the Orthodox Church has in many respects faithfully preserved the liturgical tradition of the first centuries of our era, would yet ask whether the liturgy of the laity has not—within the bounds of the *oikoumene* no less than in the

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788 west—been reduced to a mere shadow of its former self. Is not the Greek
796 Christian for all practical purposes a mere passive onlooker at a gorgeous spectacle performed by the resplendent ministers: even though the sacred participants in the divine drama sometimes descend from their apron stage and mingle with the audience?

It must be admitted that the average Greek layman communicates very rarely, often only once or twice a year; outside the immediate sphere of influence of the movements, hardly ever more than four times. This reluctance of the laity to communicate frequently is a phenomenon which has been common to east and west from a very early period—though in the west (among Orthodox of the diaspora as well as amongst western Christians) there has been a widespread return to something more nearly approaching primitive practice. Its causes are complex and, to a great extent, a matter for speculation. One factor which is peculiar to the east is the place which the *antidoron* has come to occupy. It would be an over-simplification to say that the blessed bread which the Greek Christian is accustomed to receive at the end of every liturgy is consciously looked upon as a substitute for the holy communion; nevertheless, the *antidoron* has a deep significance for the Greek layman —more, perhaps, than in other parts of the Orthodox world.

The reluctance to communicate frequently does not, as we can see from the history of certain movements within western Christendom, necessarily spring from carelessness and sloth; often it is due to a sense of unworthiness which is none the less real though it be considered misguided. Even in reforming circles in Greece to-day one discovers great wariness on the part of the clergy in recommending frequent, let
[783] alone daily, communion to their people. This is not, it is held, a matter to be undertaken lightly, or without the advice and approval of an experienced confessor; and few priests will permit their penitents to communicate as often as once a month unless they are satisfied that the desire goes hand in hand with a real determination to follow Christ in their daily life. To communicate every Sunday is regarded as an inestimable privilege, but one which is hardly for all men.

[782] Then we must not ignore the part played by the ordinary Christian
[769] in the offertory. In the country districts of Greece the housewife who
[369] bakes her bread on Saturday will set aside one loaf upon which she has stamped with a wooden seal a traditional design wherein the words "Jesus Christ conquers"—abbreviated to I(HCOY)C . X(PICTO)C . NI . KA—constitute the most prominent feature. Early on Sunday

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morning she will set out for the parish church with her loaf, and arriving whilst the singers are still chanting the morning psalms, and taking it to the door of the chapel where the elements are prepared, she will hand it to the priest together with a vessel of wine, the family diptychs —or lists of relatives and friends, both living and departed, to be commemorated by name at the holy eucharist—and perhaps a flask of oil for the lamps and a few grains of incense. Even in an urban parish church the faithful may purchase a sealed loaf at the counter in the narthex where candles are sold, and send it to the celebrant with their diptychs.

It is frequently asserted that the offering of the people disappeared from the eastern liturgies at an early date. One can only marvel at the number of eminent scholars who have been led astray in this matter through failure to distinguish clearly between the offertory procession of the Roman rite and the offering itself. The procession never found a place in the Byzantine rite, which retained the older practice of presenting the bread and wine informally before the commencement of the eucharistic liturgy. So widely-used a liturgical handbook as the late Dr. Srawley's *Early History of the Liturgy* asserts that "the offerings of the people, which consisted partly of bread and wine, out of which the elements of the eucharist were taken, and partly of alms . . . continued in the west longer than in the east".[1] In actual fact the offering of the people has never disappeared from the Byzantine liturgy and may still be witnessed in any Greek village church on the Lord's day.

But even though it be admitted that the offering of the bread and wine makes the ordinary people something more than mere passive spectators at a gorgeous pageant, it may yet be said that from very early times the rightful liturgy of the laity has in practice been transferred to the choir: the common people hardly open their mouths from one end of the eucharistic liturgy to the other. Now it is true that congregational singing as practised in the west is so rare among the Greeks as to be almost unknown. Only on one of the great festivals of the Church's year will the whole congregation take up the melody of some ancient hymn: the paschal anthem *Christ is risen from the dead*, for example, or the dismissal hymn at the Epiphany. Normally those parts of the liturgy which properly belong to the laity are in fact sung by the *psaltai* or trained singers —and this applies even to the responses to the petitions of the litanies.

[1] 2nd edition, Cambridge, 1949, p. 127. Dom Gregory Dix and Professor Burkitt have already been taken to task on this issue by the Archimandrite Alexis van der Mensbrugghe.

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788 What, on the other hand, is very common is for the laity to repeat,
● 796 almost inaudibly, the words of the prayers and hymns of the liturgy
533 as they are chanted by the singers. Not only is this practice very widespread among Greek Christians, it is also officially encouraged, while from very early times only the canonically appointed *psaltai* have been allowed to sing aloud in church. Thus, in a modern Greek catechism, the question:

"Does not the whole of the *laos* take part in public worship?" receives the following answer:

"Yes, it does and should take part; not only by standing reverently and following in spirit what is being done, but also by joining in and softly singing . . . thus to show that it is a lively member of the body of the Church."

In other words, the excellent practice commonly known to the western world as 'praying the mass' is one with which the ordinary
[782] Greek Christian is thoroughly familiar. He has never been accustomed to occupy the long hours that he spends in church with 'private' devotions—indeed the expression would be unintelligible to him. It is not only "pious Russians of the middle classes" who (in the words of John Mason Neale) "feel a repugnance to use any devotions but those of the Church".

It is necessary, moreover, to bear in mind that the separation between the Greek *psaltai* and the whole body of the faithful is much less marked than in western Christendom, with its surpliced choirs. The singers are quite plainly members of the congregation: the spokesmen of the
[292] whole body of the *laos* amongst whom they stand. They normally wear
[369] lay dress; only in an urban parish church will one normally see an *anagnostes*, or reader, wearing a simple black gown. The ordinary singers are indistinguishable from the rest of the people. Indeed, one of the
788 things which commonly strikes the visitor to Greece who finds his way
796 for the first time to a parish church is the unexpectedly prominent (some would say obtrusive) part played by the laity in the church services. Very often long stretches of incomprehensible offices seem to be conducted entirely by laymen; the parish priest only occasionally emerging from the sanctuary, and disappearing as quickly after a brief *ekphonesis*, to leave matters wholly in the hands of two middle-aged gentlemen in double-breasted suits, supported by a nondescript collection of young men and boys.

This, to the western mind, curiously prominent liturgical rôle of the lay-singers has occasioned comment in other ages than our own. On the
[175] feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury in the year of our Lord 1400, King Henry IV rode out to Blackheath at the head of an imposing array, to

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welcome to his dominions the Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus with a following which included several Greek ecclesiastics, both bishops and priests.[1] These unwonted guests remained in London until the end of February following. The Greek services were celebrated daily, many English churchmen being present, and several contemporary accounts of the impression created by these unfamiliar rites have been preserved. More than one chronicler notes with surprise that laymen as well as clerks took an active part in the services which, to quote Adam of Usk, "were joined in as well by soldiers as by priests; for they chanted them without distinction in their native tongue".

One last word in connexion with the liturgy of the laity. A contemporary of King Henry IV relates that the Emperor's chaplains were catechised by certain English churchmen who had been present at the Greeks' services as to whether "the common people and the ignorant in their country did indeed understand the scriptures and the divine words which they recited together with the learned." Is the 'old school-Greek' whereof Covel and others speak, sufficiently understanded of the people?

Let us hear another voice from the fifteenth century: "The Grekis", says John Purvey, "wiche ben nobel men, han al this in ther owne langage. But yet adversaries of trewith seien, wane men rehersen that Grekis . . . han al in ther owne langage, the clerkis of hem speiken grammaticalliche and the puple understondith it not."

It should be remarked that the Orthodox Church has never opposed the translation of the scriptures or the liturgy into new tongues when such translation has been necessary for the furtherance of her missionary and pastoral work. On the contrary, the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is probably celebrated in more languages than any other of the historic rites of Christendom. I have myself been present at celebrations at which old Slavonic, Greek, English, French and Arabic have all been used during the course of the liturgy, and W. J. Birkbeck mentions a committee he encountered at St. Petersburg in 1889 which was engaged in translating the liturgy for a small tribe in the north-east of Siberia, numbering less than 5,000 souls and whose language contained scarcely

[1] The story of this Byzantine Emperor's fruitless expedition to the west in quest of military aid against the Turk, and of his sojourn in Paris and London—one of the most diverting episodes in fifteenth-century history—is related in some detail in Schlumberger's *Byzance et Croisades* (Paris, 1927), pp. 87-147: "Un Empereur de Byzance à Paris et à Londres."

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more than 200 words in all. Amongst the second and third generations of Orthodox *emigrés* in America to-day English is being widely used as a liturgical language.

This being so, it is reasonable to presume that where an ancient liturgical language is retained (as in Greece, for example) it is still tolerably intelligible to the ordinary people. It may indeed be questioned whether, except for brief epochs of the Church's history, her common prayer has ever been cast in a language wholly familiar to the unlearned. This is not the place to embark upon a description of the present condition of the Greek language: the subject is peculiarly complex and, in certain of its aspects, highly controversial. Suffice it to say that the *katharevousa*, or 'purified' language, which is still, despite many violent assaults, the normal medium of literary expression, differs comparatively little from the formal Greek of the Byzantine writers. The leading articles of a newspaper such as *Kathimerini* (the Greek equivalent of *The Times*) can be read with fair comprehension by an average classical scholar. The *demotiki*, or popular language, on the other hand, has undergone a far greater transformation since the days when the liturgies were composed, so that a comparison of the two forms of Greek will reveal very wide differences both in grammar and vocabulary.

Both *katharevousa* and *demotiki* are current to-day, and an educated Greek will be familiar with either. A Greek bishop, for example, will normally use, within the privacy of his own metropolis and in everyday conversation with his people, a Greek which he would never dream of employing when writing to a fellow *despotes* or to the Holy Synod. Amongst the ordinary people, however, at any rate since the popular language ousted the *katharevousa* from the primary schools, the latter is never used; the average shepherd or grocer would be hard put to it to compose a letter in the sort of Greek that may be heard in the lecture rooms of the national university.

This does not mean, however, that the Greek of the liturgies is more or less incomprehensible to the common people. Far from it. It is often quite startling to find how much of the Psalter, the New Testament and the Church's prayers the Greek peasant has made his own. The fact is that in the ordinary Greek village the children spend so much time in church from earliest infancy onwards that they inevitably become familiar with the language that is used there. By the time they grow up they will commonly know much of the liturgy and the scriptures almost by heart. If anyone should doubt this let him

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consider the family prayers and personal devotions of the Greek laity. These are made up wholly of prayers, psalms and hymns drawn from the liturgy: scarcely ever (save in certain circles influenced by the new movements) do they include vernacular prayers. The *Hiera Synopsis*—the laity's manual of prayers—consists entirely of extracts from the Church's liturgy. The form of evening prayer commonly used in a Greek household is simply a shortened version of the Little Compline which closes the day in every monastery.

The 'liturgical' approach to the Bible has, it must be confessed, certain limitations. If the laity were present at *all* the services of the Church they would indeed acquire a working knowledge of the greater part of the holy scriptures. In practice, however, they will normally hear only those portions of the Old and New Testaments which are read on Sundays and holy days at the eucharistic liturgy and (depending on the regularity of their attendance) at mattins and evensong. Since 'Bible-reading' is little practised outside the new movements (where, indeed, it is universal) this inevitably means that the majority of the Greek laity, being wholly dependent upon the lections which occur in the course of the regular liturgical cycle, are unfamiliar with considerable portions of the Bible, particularly of the Old Testament.

It is, moreover, almost certainly true that the common people understand very imperfectly some of the elaborate 'canons' which recur only once every year (and then generally at mattins when few of the laity are present in church). But, as W. J. Birkbeck remarks not inappositely of the Russian muzhiks of his day: "I myself have heard a great many more quotations (and intelligent quotations too) made from the canons . . . of St. Cosmas and St. John Damascene than I have ever heard from the Norfolk peasantry, amongst whom I have lived all my life, from the Hebrew prophets, which are read, or ought to be read, in all our churches throughout the months of September and October!"

While many a Greek Christian's familiarity with the Bible will extend only to those passages which are read during the course of the liturgy, his *theological* understanding of the scriptures is commonly far deeper than that of the, often better-informed, English churchman. Unlike so many an earnest student of the Bible, he realises—however obscurely—that the divine history is related at every point to what goes on week by week in his parish church: that it is only to those who are baptised into Christ's saving death, who are living in the mystery revealed in the Church, that the full meaning of the scriptures is laid bare.

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THE WATERS OF MARAH

Autres temps, autres mœurs. "Unhappily", said Father Callinicos, as we waited at the foot of the precipice and Gregorios unsaddled the pony, "there have been regrettable changes; formerly there was great security." The windlass, it appeared, was now used only for hauling up firewood and victuals. We took a last look at the leeks, now 100 feet above our heads, and entered the dark passage which gives access to the steps leading to the monastery. Agathangellos was awaiting us outside the now disused refectory: a youngish monk, clad in a tattered grey cassock and soft cap, who had come to the Meteora, we subsequently discovered, in 1939. He carried us off to the guest-chamber (little used in these days) and left us among the faded memorials of former splendour while he went in search of refreshment. A few minutes later the insistent clamour of the *semandron* summoned us to vespers in the fine *catholicon*, dating from the middle of the sixteenth century, where Athanasius the Athonite, clad in the habit of a western monk, looks down from the apse—a fragment of an earlier church on the same site, built by Ioasaph in 1388. A frugal supper of vegetables, goats' milk cheese and bread followed, and afterwards we sat on wooden stools round a fire of brushwood and talked to the *Igoumenos* and the other members of his little family, while Agathangellos busied himself in the kitchens, where cats as lean as the stylite saints depicted in the frescoes of the narthex lurked in the shadows. Father Callinicos, we discovered, had been at the Great Meteoron for nearly forty years. There was one other priest in the community: a Father Theophylaktos who had lived in the Athonite house of Xeropotamou for several years as a simple monk before he was ordained and came to Thessaly in 1935. Another monk—also named Callinicos—had been carried off by the Italians and had died in exile. Apart from Father Agathangellos, the only remaining member of the community was a very ancient personage named Paul who appeared to lead the life of a solitary, and whom we but dimly discerned amidst the shadows of the church. Gregorios, who had accompanied us from Kalambaka, was no monk but a married man with a wife and several children, lately returned to their village in the mountains to the west of Trikkala. We encountered him again some ten days later, breasting a snow-covered ridge among the foothills of Pindos with a couple of heavily-laden pack-animals, and accompanied by a little troop of refugees on their way home after three years in Kalambaka.

Shortly after eight o'clock Father Agathangellos reappeared with a

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huge iron lantern, to lead the way along rickety galleries and past rows of long-abandoned cells to the church. We shivered in our stalls while compline was shrilly chanted, without book and by the light of a single guttering candle, in the narthex. "They are so expert and ready therein", says Rycaut, "that they can run from the beginning to the ending without stop or hesitation, and gallop it over at that rate, that one must have a good ear and some skill in the Greek language, to distinguish the different sound of the words which they utter." As the monastic day ended, the monks emerged from the shadows of the narthex, and, one by one, filed past the *Igoumenos* to ask his forgiveness and blessing, and he theirs:

"Your blessing, holy father, and forgive me, a sinner."

"May God forgive you, holy father."

At the Great Meteoron, despite the gloomy prophecies of those who had tried to dissuade us from staying at the monasteries, there were plenty of blankets, and we slept soundly till, long before the dawn, the *semandron* recalled us to church for mattins and lauds. We groped our way towards the door of the narthex, slipping and stumbling on the ice-bound rocks and mindful of Father Agathangellos' parting exhortation to "avoid the edge of the abyss". The whole world seemed wrapt in an unfathomable silence—infinitely remote there floated up out of the vast emptiness at our feet the faint clink of a chain, where a mule moved restlessly in the camp at Kalambaka. We crept into the church with the unearthly chant rising and falling in our ears. Agathangellos, a candle held between his fingers, swayed back and forth at his lectern, a solitary pool of yellow light in the universal blackness; an occasional movement from the remoter recesses of the darkened church betrayed the presence of other members of the community. With the first pale light of dawn mattins gave place to lauds, and as a shaft of dusty sunlight pierced the darkness, picking out the gold and crimson of antique frescoes and bringing new life to limbs rigid with the cold, Father Callinicos, from within the sanctuary, took up the ancient hymn: "Glory to Thee who hast shown us the light . . ."

When the office was ended and we had drunk a cup of coffee and a thimbleful of *ouzo*, we spent a little time exploring the monastery, now stripped of all its movable treasures. Then, after taking leave of our kind hosts, we made our way to Aghios Barlaam where we were welcomed by the Archimandrite Ambrose and a young deacon named Bessarion. The *Igoumenos* was below in Kalambaka but would be back

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792 monastery there arrived from Trikkala a certain Papa Iannis, an octogenarian with three married daughters. He had obtained his bishop's permission to come and share the life of the monks (there being no other priest in the community). Finally, there was Basil, a layman of sixty-five, who, after spending his boyhood in America, had returned to his native Thessaly to serve more than one monastery as a resourceful factotum; and there were the inevitable stylite cats. The *Igoumenos* was plainly a sick man—it was little wonder, considering what he had been through during the last few years and the rigours of the life at St. Stephen's—and the morning we left the monastery there was not a monk capable of getting to his place in church for *mesonyktikon* and *orthros*.

792 796 Life at the Meteora to-day is hard indeed, and under such conditions as prevail it is hardly astonishing that the liturgical life of the monasteries should exhibit but little of the dignity and splendour which one rightly looks for in a large and well-ordered community. We were none the less deeply impressed by the efforts which are made to maintain the regular course of the *opus Dei*. Night after night, while Kalambaka sleeps, the few remaining ascetics of the Thebaid of Staghi gather in the dimly-lighted chapels among the high rocks to perform what for the monk must always be his primary liturgy; morning by morning as the sun touches the heights of Pindos with new fire and the flickering candles grow pale in the first light of dawn, the great trinitarian doxology banishes the shades of night and unites heaven and earth, angels and archangels, sinful men and those whose warfare is accomplished, in a single bond of adoration:

> Glory to God in the highest,
> And on earth peace, goodwill towards men.
> We praise Thee,
> We bless Thee,
> We worship Thee,
> We glorify Thee,
> We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.
> O Lord King,
> O God of Heaven,
> Father Almighty;
> O Lord, Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ,
> And O Holy Spirit.

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dioceses, for it was not until 1936 that the Zoë Brotherhood established a centre in Salonica. The motto of this movement (which I have quoted at the head of this chapter), provides a key to much of the most notable work that is being done in Greece to-day; 'the victory of the width'—to give a literal translation of a phrase that cannot easily be put into English—ultimately depends upon the faithfulness and energy with which 'the battle of the depth' is waged. There can, in other words, be no fruitful outward activity that does not spring from a deepened interior life. It is only as the missioner himself is truly converted, only as he himself learns to dwell in Christ and as Christ is formed in him, that he can be used as an effective instrument for the conversion of others. Apart from this all his activity is in vain:

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . . If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

It augurs well for the future that the strenuous missionary activity now being undertaken in almost every town and diocese of Greece is so completely grounded in prayer and the study of the scriptures, finding its centre in the divine liturgy and the sacraments. The foundations are being well laid.

The full scope of the activity of the unofficial religious movements is perhaps most conveniently described if we consider in turn the chief instruments now being employed to bring about the regeneration of the Greek people in Christ. These include preaching, the mystery of confession, the organisation of catechetical schools, youth movements and study circles, the publication of Christian literature, and, finally, liturgical reform.

Preaching has from the outset been of primary importance. Cosmas Phlamiatos, Apostolos Makrakes and Eusebius Matthopoulos all relied upon the spoken *kerygma* as their most effective instrument. The theologian—whether cleric or layman—who serves on the staff of a provincial bishop is first and foremost the *hierokeryx*, the sacred herald, whose duty it is to assist the bishop in the ministry of the word. In the course of the last two generations there has been a tremendous revival of preaching—at any rate in the towns. Every parish church in Athens and the Piraeus now has a sermon at the Sunday liturgy—normally an exposition of the Gospel which immediately precedes it—

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793 while in many churches and halls there are regular sermons at other
796 times during the week.

In the country dioceses, owing to the shortage of qualified preachers, sermons are still all too rarely to be heard outside the cathedral towns. The bishop and the diocesan preacher, with such other assistants as can be mustered from local resources, will visit one or two villages every Sunday, but in a diocese of perhaps 100 scattered communities it may well be that months will pass without the majority of the people having the opportunity to hear a sermon. I remember one Macedonian 'saint', who had taken advantage of the cessation of fighting in his diocese from the spring of 1949 onwards to undertake an intensive preaching campaign, telling me that in some villages it was more than ten years since a sermon had last been heard.

793 An energetic *hierokeryx* will often perform wonders; take for instance
796 this typical week-end itinerary of a lay theologian, a member of Zoë,
484 who used to be stationed at Kozani; on Saturday afternoon by army truck to Amyntaion (a distance of about fifty-five kilometres) and thence to the village of Lechovo, an hour's journey to the westward towards Kastoria. Here he gives an evening address in the church, the greater part of the community present. On Sunday morning a sermon at the liturgy is followed by an address to the young men and women. After a hurried meal he sets off on foot to the neighbouring village of Skydro for an address, not this time in the church but in the square. Thence he climbs to the village of Nymphaion, high on the mountain-side, for two further addresses before nightfall—one in church, the other, for the young people, in the school. On Monday morning he proceeds by mule to Aetos and thence to Amyntaion and Kozani. The assistant *hierokeryx* of the diocese will in the meantime have set out for the *comopolis* of Servia to preach, from a cart standing in the midst of the square, to the crowds who have gathered there for the weekly market.

793 The Greek *hierokeryx* can in general assume in his hearers a knowledge
796 of the fundamentals of the Christian faith such as can no longer be
537 taken for granted in England, at any rate. He and they will speak a common language—even though many have forgotten the reality that lies behind the familiar phrases. The outward tokens of a Christian
[785] society have still survived to a remarkable degree—the fasts of the Church's year, for instance, are still observed as a matter of course by multitudes who would make no claim to piety above the average. In

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these circumstances it is understandable that contemporary preaching should (to accept the distinction now current in reforming circles) be practical rather than theoretical: should deal less with doctrine than with conduct.

Father Eusebius was wont to insist on the importance of ending every sermon with a clear and distinct conclusion, to bring home the particular moral and spiritual truth with which the preacher had been dealing to the conscience of his hearers, as well as on the need for preaching in a style suited to their condition. His example has been salutary, and in reforming circles to-day one never hears the type of homily still cultivated by a few eccentric saints who bewilder their silly sheep with florid discourses framed in the ornate periods of Psellos or Anna Comnena. I well recall a certain *hierokeryx*, a lovable if idiorrhythmic character, who modelled his festal homilies on the funeral orations of Bossuet (a much-thumbed volume that accompanied him everywhere). These triumphs of rhetoric, which must have left the Epirote peasantry groping in vain for any clear and distinct practical conclusion, would be composed months before the date of their delivery and constantly reworked and polished until they reached the requisite height of literary perfection. Such artistry would be frowned upon in the religious societies.

The work of the preacher is supplemented by that of the confessor. Although the mystery of confession has in practice fallen into sad neglect, owing to the shortage of qualified *pneumatikoi*, there has been no more effective instrument for the reawakening of the Greek Church; none that is more highly prized in reforming circles to-day. While east and west are at one as to the fundamental nature of this 'mystery', there is a certain difference of emphasis. Amongst the Greeks the element of 'ghostly counsel and advice' is far more prominent than is commonly the case amongst western Christians. So marked is this difference of emphasis that Dr. Covel—who is as immoderate in his assaults upon the Romish doctrine of auricular confession as upon any other of the 'seven pretended sacraments'—is yet moved to applaud the Greek practice as a pious and laudable institution: such a confession, he remarks, or rather (lest there should be any misunderstanding) "serious Conference or Discourse as this with a Ghostly Father, or discreet Minister, is justly observed and commended by our own Church".

In these circumstances it is natural that considerably more importance should be attached to the personal character and qualifications of the

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Of liturgical reform I have already had occasion to speak. Its primary object is to enable the laity to participate more fully and intelligently in the eucharistic action, through more frequent communion (Father Eusebius was himself in the habit of celebrating daily), and through a greater 'openness' in the manner of celebrating the holy mysteries. In Athens and Salonica many people now follow the services in the little manual of the Archimandrite Seraphim Papakostas—the popularity of which may be judged by the fact that it had reached its fifth edition by 1950. In general, where the new movements have exercised an effective influence, a high standard of liturgical propriety prevails, though it must be confessed that certain musical innovations of recent years have been unfortunate, to say the least.

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All the movements of which I have been speaking have remained quite unofficial in character, though they have always carried out their work with the blessing of the ecclesiastical authorities and under the general supervision of the local bishop. There has of late, however, been a development of a rather different nature, so important as to demand brief consideration. This is what amounts to the refounding of a body known as the 'Apostolic Diaconate of the Church of Greece', which came into being as long ago as 1930. I do not propose to dwell upon its fortunes prior to its virtual reconstitution: suffice it to say that although great potentialities were latent in this organisation from the outset, its actual activity during the first fifteen years of its life was on a very small scale. It is directed by a council of members of the Holy Synod and professors of the theological faculty of the University of Athens under the presidency of the Archbishop, with Professor Basil Vellas as general director.

The aim of this official organisation is to systematise and co-ordinate the many-sided missionary activity now being undertaken throughout the length and breadth of Greece. In addition to its headquarters at Moni Petraki in Athens it has a local office in every diocese, and is assured of a basis of material resources by a system of annual diocesan contributions.

The possibilities inherent in such a venture are without question very great, and already much has been accomplished. A theological hostel and a school for preachers and confessors have been established at Moni Petraki: the latter promises to be of the greatest service in the

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students from places as far distant as Drama and Katerini. A candidate for the two-year course which the seminary provided must have reached the fourth class of his elementary school: an event which in the case of certain of the more venerable amongst these bewhiskered scholars must have been more than a generation remote from their reappearance *in statu pupillari*.

The programme of studies, as at all these lower seminaries, was eminently practical and was related at every point to the peculiar circumstances within which the Greek country parson exercises his priestly ministry. It was grounded, as is fitting, "in the Book of books, the store-house and magazine of life and comfort, the Holy Scriptures," and, in particular, in the study of the text of the Gospels. The director was assisted by another lay theologian, the preacher of the diocese. Their lectures on the Bible, doctrine, catechising, the holy canons and liturgical matters, were supplemented by instruction in the ecclesiastical chant (given by the chief singer of the metropolis), and by talks on the rudiments of first-aid from a local doctor: for the country parson does not merely "condescend to the knowledge of tillage and pasturage"; he desires to be all to his parish, and "not only a pastor but also a physician". A little medical knowledge does indeed constitute an invaluable addition to the skills of a country priest in a region where the only known medicaments are aspirins and ouzo, and doctors are as rare as dissenters.

The seminary at Kozani was housed in a rambling, somewhat dilapidated building adjoining the church of SS. Cosmas and Damian. Its furnishing and equipment were simple in the extreme. Twice a day the lecture-room was transformed into a refectory. The students slept seven or eight to a room on straw mattresses laid on the bare boards, and St. Benedict's maxim: *stramenta . . . sufficiant matta, sagum et lena et capitale*, was observed by all alike.

The liturgical life of the seminary was centred in the church which lies on the other side of the courtyard. The whole community assembled twice daily to sing the divine office, and on Sundays and holy days the liturgy was celebrated. Those amongst the students who lived within easy distance of Kozani used to go home every Saturday and return on Monday morning after celebrating the holy mysteries in their own parish churches. They used also to go to their villages for the great festivals. In other cases some temporary provision would be made for the parishes concerned: the late Metropolitan of Grevena, for example, would allow

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XIV

THE HISTORY OF A COUNTRY PARSON

> So great was his sanctity while a shepherd, that he was thought worthy of being made a pastor of men: and having been assigned the bishopric of one of the cities in Cyprus . . . on account of his extreme humility he continued to feed his sheep during his incumbency of the bishopric.
>
> SOCRATES
> *Ecclesiastical History*, I, xii

IN 1892, scarcely more than a decade since the day when the blue and white ensign of the Kingdom of the Hellenes had replaced the crescent of the infidel over the citadel at Trikkala, the wife of the village carpenter in an obscure hamlet amongst the mountains to the westward of Kalambaka gave birth to a son. The carpenter and his family dwelt in a substantial stone house a few paces beyond the village square, where a great plane tree overshadowed the church, dedicated in honour of the Egyptian anchorite Bessarion. Like many families in northern Pindos they spoke not only Greek but also the language of the Tsintsars, the Koutso-Vlachs who come down from the high pastures every autumn with their flocks and herds to winter in the Thessalian plain.

Like their neighbours at Palaiochori the Photis family (for so the carpenter was named) was virtually independent of the world that lay beyond the mountains. They owned a few sheep and goats; the *Kyria* Photis and her daughters spun their own yarn and wove the strong indigo cloth which was made up into *sarka* and *palto* for men and women alike. There was home-baked bread, goats' milk cheese and *yiaourti*, and an occasional lamb roasted on a spit to celebrate a festival; an abundance of rough red wine and the fiery ouzo which gladdens the heart of the traveller when the snow lies deep in Pindos. From time to time the carpenter would saddle his pack-animals and make an expedition to Trikkala, returning with an axe or a set of chisels, and dried figs for the children.

Constantinos, as the carpenter's son was duly christened, began to go to the village school when he was seven. Long before this time,

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however, he was familiar with the mysterious drama which was enacted week by week in the little church of St. Bessarion. Sunday by Sunday, festival by festival, the people of Palaiochori—the carpenter (who had a fine voice and was also the chief *psaltes*); his wife and daughters; Makroiannis, who presided over the tavern; the *Kyria* Andromache, who always stood before the royal doors when Papa Athanasi read the gospel of the resurrection at the end of mattins; Papa Demosthenes, who had fought in the old wars and had seen innumerable wonders, had been to America and visited the holy mountain of Athos—all were caught up for a brief space into the life of the heavenly Jerusalem and joined their praises to those of the saints who looked down on them from wall and eikonostasis.

The carpenter's son learned by heart many of the great psalms and hymns of the Church: long passages from the Gospels and from the Old Testament prophecies which were read on the eves of great festivals and during Holy Week. As he grew older and learned to read he would stand among the singers who crowded round the two lecterns every Sunday, and sometimes the parish priest would allow him to climb up the steps of the bishop's throne that stood on the south side of the church and sing the Epistle from a tattered volume printed at Venice towards the end of the eighteenth century. On the eve of a festival he would come running from the saw-mill or his father's workshop when Papa Athanasi clanged the two bells which hung in the branches of the plane tree beside the church, to take his place among the singers. He learned to find his way about the complicated service-books and to sing the ecclesiastical chant with a confidence which rivalled that of the chief *psaltes* himself.

When Costas left school he went to work with his father. He was already well versed in the rudiments of his trade, and by the time he was called to the colours in 1913 he was a proficient craftsman. He served in the army for three years and had two further spells of soldiering—from 1917 to 1919, and again, in the disastrous campaign in Asia Minor, from 1921 to 1923—before, released from the army at last, he came home to Palaiochori and married a girl from the neighbouring village of Krania. The marriage was blessed with three children: two boys, born in 1924 and 1934, who were christened Leonidas and Athanasius respectively, and a daughter born in 1931.

Meanwhile there was work enough for the village carpenter besides begetting children; even when he was not at his bench there was ground

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torrent bed, and we followed while Papa Costas and Spyridon Oikonomides, the *epitropos*, stood beneath the great tree in the village square and waved farewell:

"Kalo taxtidi; o Theos mazi sas!"

A good journey; may God go with you.

At dusk we rode into Chrysomelia—a large village lying at 900 metres—after a journey which will long linger in my memory. For the best part of an hour Antony the Zealot (our guide) had questioned me relentlessly as to the constitutions and canons ecclesiastical concerning marriage with a deceased wife's sister within the jurisdiction of the *metropolites* of Canterbury, whilst the mules floundered in deep snow as we climbed laboriously towards the village, the buildings of an abandoned monastery far below among the pines. We had been delayed at the cottage of Papa Nicolas, the *geros*, till it was close on three o'clock. There had been a misunderstanding as to the rendezvous, arising, apparently, from the fact that the curate of the neighbouring hamlet of Aidona was also a Papa Costas.

It was the eve of the feast of St. Antony, and the Zealot was preparing to celebrate his name-day. In a tiny chapel on the outskirts of the shattered village vespers was drawing to a close. The village church, dating from 1580 and dedicated to St. George, was a total ruin. We stayed for the liturgy next morning and all the men and boys of the village accompanied us to church. After a distribution of the blessed bread Papa Athanasius Tsergoulas, the pastor of this mountain flock, took us to see his dwelling—a tiny cell of mud bricks set amidst the ruins of the house which he had built some thirty years earlier—and there we sat around a table in the pale sunlight outside the newly-opened tavern and sipped ouzo with the village elders, while crowds of wild, ragged children played amongst the ruins of the church—there were nearly 300 of them and it was eight years since the school had ceased to perform its liturgy.

Chrysomelia had been one of the most important villages of this region, with a population of 1,050. It had suffered at the hands of the Germans at the same time as Palaiochori. The people had begun to return in October. Scarcely a house in the whole village had escaped destruction.

The devastation was no less widespread at the hamlet of Kato Perlangion, where we slept the following night, wrapped in rugs on the

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THE WATERS OF MARAH

727 floor of the village president's cottage with a great fire burning at our
346 feet. The parish priest had been awaiting us in the square, and after I
[123] had photographed the ruins of the church he rang the great bell which
[796] hung from the branches of a plane tree and the whole community gathered to sing the first vespers of the feast of St. Athanasius the Great, in a chapel which had been disused for generations and had only been repaired since the return of the refugees the previous autumn. No more than forty families had as yet found their way back to the village and the destruction was very great. The next morning it was raining heavily and the mud lay so deep in the tiny chapel that planks had to be laid down to facilitate the movements of the celebrant.

727 Papa Georgios Papageorgiou was himself a native of Chrysomelia.
793 He had been ordained in the early days of the war after living for a
[346] time in the monastery of St. Stephen on the windy heights above Kalambaka. His first parish had been wiped out of existence by the Germans, and now the Lord Cherubim, Metropolitan of Trikka and Staghi, had sent him to this ruined hamlet, deep in the folds of Pindos.
[342] He lived with his 'priestess' and their four children in a wretched hovel roofed with corrugated iron a little way below the church and, in the absence of a schoolmaster, was himself acting as a temporary *didaskalos*.

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346 We spent a night at the village of Vanakoulia on our way back to
[872] Kalambaka. When we arrived the whole population seemed to be engaged in the task of setting up a school in the narthex of the church:
[211] a severe structure only lately completed. Over the doorway was set a
[457] rough inscription in rustic Greek commemorating the destruction of the church by the Germans and its subsequent rebuilding by the inhabitants—aided, as we later discovered, by generous gifts from relatives in America.

DESTROYED BY GERMANS

1943

REBUILT

AT THE EXPENSE OF THE INHABITANTS

JUNE 1949

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

795 Greek is as yet only beginning to awake to the full significance of the discovery, and it may well be some years before Athens and Salonica are in a position to make that contribution to the life and thought of Christendom as a whole of which they are potentially capable. Yet from out of the depths of suffering and desolation there has come the rebirth of a Christian nation. The Church of Greece has emerged from her fiery trial purified, and conscious, as perhaps never before, of her mission. What may be the ultimate consequences of such a regeneration none can say: the possibilities are infinite.

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[214 794] In June, 1948, on the festival of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, the Christian Union of Professional Men of Greece published a stencilled typescript of a draft entitled *Towards a Christian Civilisation*—since issued in book form by the Damascus Press. These pages, as the authors remarked in the original preface to the work, came from a country wherein the agitation, the uncertainty and sometimes the agony of the world had been concentrated; from a land often referred to by her friends as "this unhappy country". And yet, they went on, "we know that our happiness (or unhappiness) depends not on the outcome of external political events, but on whether the Christian and spiritual foundations of our life are firmly established or not". Their voice, they concluded, was not the despairing voice of a nation crying out to the world: *morituri te salutamus*; rather it was that of a people who, even from the depth of their present agony, sought to echo our Lord's words: "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." That is the spirit that is abroad in Greece to-day.

795 796 If I were asked for a single picture to epitomise the present state of the Greek Church, I would turn once more to the Macedonian township of Edessa, set amidst streams and cherry orchards on the summit of the cliff that bars the way from Salonica to the frontier metropolis of Florina. In the early hours of the morning of the feast of the Epiphany in the year 1949, while the Metropolitan of Edessa and Pella, the Lord Panteleimon, with his deacon, Father Gabriel, two or three refugee monks, his mother, the boys from the orphanage and a handful of lay people, were singing the long vigil-service in the chapel of the metropolis, this already battered town was attacked by a Communist force. By dawn the place was encircled.

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EPILOGUE

At the accustomed hour (despite the violence of the bombardment) the bells were rung and the Bishop went with his clergy to the ancient basilica, which stands on the very brink of the cliff, and began to celebrate the liturgy. Before the great blessing of the waters was reached, however, the din had become so appalling, the whole fabric of the church shook so violently, that it became necessary to move to the upper part of the town to the church of Saint Demetrius of Thessalonica. Here the service was resumed and at last the moment when the Bishop would plunge the cross into the waters drew near. Standing in the midst of his people and attended by his deacon, the Lord Panteleimon began to recite in a loud voice the Poem of Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. Without, the bombardment raged; but above the clamour of the artillery and the rattle of small arms fire the voice of the Saint of Edessa rang out exultant:

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To-day the offences of men are washed away in the waters of Jordan;
To-day Paradise is opened to men and the Son of Righteousness has shed on us His light;
To-day the bitter water of the people of Moses becomes most sweet from the presence of the Lord;
To-day are we released from our ancient lamenting, and as a new Israel we find salvation;
To-day are we redeemed from darkness, and illumined by the knowledge of God;
To-day the gloom of the world is done away in the Epiphany of our God. . . .
To-day we have been purchased for the Kingdom of Heaven, for of the Kingdom of the Lord there shall be no end.

/31 cont./ where thoughts are crystallized into action. Here the political leaders meet their followers.

Every stranger, merchant, peddler, politician, government employee, or any other agent, goes first to the coffee house where he can get reliable information and pass on his mission.

The Orthodox religion has been enforced upon the people directly from the church. The religion is taught at the school, and church ceremonies are conducted in the church. The whole family goes to the church every Sunday morning and thus the child follows the elders in their religious beliefs. The church through its numerous holidays teaches something new to the people, brings up the people to it through various ceremonies. The child /32/ learns from father and mother that this or that holiday has this or that moral meaning to their lives. The school as a part of its religious education obliges every student with the teacher to attend church on Sundays and holidays. The teacher or the priest on such holiday occasions explains to the people the religious significance of the day and its practical application to their lives. Their Christian religion is unlike the Christian religion of many other sects. The Orthodox church believes in one God and in Christ as his son, but according to the nature of their demands they pray to special designated saints whom they think are able to help them. For example, for rain they pray to St. Ilias, who rides in a carriage and makes the thunder. For war they pray to St. Demeter. For travel on sea they pray to St. Nicola. For having a child to St. Nufrios. For sickness to St. Spyridion, etc. down the line. It is not so simple as the Protestant religion, nor so simple as Protestantism in that it depends much more on ceremonials. They take their religion seriously and believe in it completely.

When a cow or a member of a family gets sick, or the crop is not as promising, either the priest or another person next to the priest will be called to offer prayer. /33/ The priest is the representative of the Saints through whom they communicate with God. Religion makes a large part of their activity and thus the youngsters as they grow, fit themselves in it and take their respective places.

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Recreational Function. Recreation, as such, in organized form is not found in the villages and yet there is plenty of recreation, which the farmers enjoy throughout the year. For older people to play ball or athletics seems very childish. Certain traditional customs handed down from generation to generation provide both group, inter-village, inter-neighborhood, inter-relative and family recreation. For example when a baby is born the whole larger family rejoices and have feasts, when the baby is baptized the whole neighborhood and relatives are invited to join in the ceremonial feast. When a member of the family gets married the whole village participated with their musical instruments. The marriage feast lasts three days, until everybody is exhausted from children of five years to grown ups of 65 years, by dancing, eating and singing. Another recreation is the celebration of their name days. It is surprising to note that only the name day of the male person is observed more than the female name day.

Then come the numerous religious holidays at dif /34/ ferent seasons when inter-village recreation takes place. The village that celebrates its saint day provides shelter and food for those that came from remote villages. At these holidays or Saint days takes place something similar to that of the county fairs in the United States. After the church service the people gather around the church yard and, with their colorful dresses, dance in a big circle while musical instruments play their local songs. Sometimes as many as 250 people dance together. The intensity and the length of the holiday depends on the importance of the Saint.

The year's most important recreational holiday is at Easter period. Three days are devoted for its celebration and the whole village, friends or enemies eat at the common table, drink from the common glass and dance at the common village dancing place. This is the time of the year when all those that have plenty give to those that do not have. The ovens of the village fill the village with the ordor of roast lamb, cookies and other kinds of pastry. The wine cellars open and the best drinks are offered to the good

/34 cont./
wishers. People are formed into groups and visit every house where the table is set in the center of the main room with different drinks, colored eggs and good food. The groups crack /p. 35 skipped in original numbering/ /36/ an egg and wish the hostess saying, "Christ is risen", and the house owner answers, "Truly he is risen".

Children run through the streets dressed in their new clothes and carry colored eggs and candies. These are the days when the houses are open to every one. The recreation that these three days offer to these people is far greater than all the rest of the holidays of the year. For the Orthodox church the birth of Christ does not have so much importance as the resurrection of Christ which shows the Athanasia of the spirit.

At this time of the year everything takes life in nature, too. The almond trees, the cherry trees, the pear trees are in blossom. The fields are green and nature takes the appearance of living again. All these combined leave an unresistable influence upon every person. Through such recreation which is a part of their religion, the people forgive each other and old hatreds give way to renewed friendship and forgiveness. It is surprising to note how much influence these holidays have in the lives of the people that live together. The spirit of hospitality, the spirit of giving to those that do not have, the spirit of taking active part in village movements and the blind obedience to the orders of the higher rank, are a result of these traditionally influenced holidays that are represented by different Saints. Recreation is thus closely associated with the /37/religious holidays.

Play of Children. Whether at school or outside of school the children do not have organized recreation. At the school the weekly exercises which are more or less military are given by the teacher. The children have two recess periods of ten minutes each from 8-12. At these periods they devise their own play. At home the child has no time for play. He or she will graze the oxen or weed the garden and fields, sweep the yard and help in housework. While very young the children are taught to work and

/37 cont./

help the father and mother in the struggle of life. At certain times of the year when there is less work at home and in the fields the neighborhood children come together and play hide and seek. When boys and girls reach the age of 11-12 they separate and seldom play together anymore. The child in Megali Vrisis has a hard time to express its freedom.

The school organizes picnics at which the teachers teach the children how to sing and dance. These picnics are the only active days that provide ample time for the children to play.

Music Music is something which is never taught but it is there always. From children to grown-ups all sing and dance singing is a part of their dance it is learned easily. There are no books or music notes and the musi-/38/ cal instrument players never learned with notes but just by hearing. Children going to the fields sing, people working in groups in the fields sing, and groups returning home from harvest sing. People sing at the coffee houses, at their homes and in the woods. Shepherds sing with their fiddles and peddlers advertise their goods with a song. Singing runs through the church services from beginning to the end and when the women dress up the bride they sing all night to her. No one writes any song to remember it. They are handed down from generation to generation and sung so often that there is no fear of forgetting them or losing them. Singing is a part of their recreational life, a part of their courtship and a part of their expression of appreciation of nature. The philosophy of life of those people is built on tradition and singing comes voluntarily to express themselves. Some of their songs have to with incidents of heroism or suffering and torture. There are songs that move one to tears and there are others that move one to sacrifice everything he possesses. Even the happiest songs are tinged with an air of sadness. It is probable that their ancestors have been through gloomy periods which has influenced their songs. May be these wars will create more such songs among the village people /39/ for their beloved ones who were killed during the spring months. Each girl who lost her sweetheart in the war will make a song for him and sing it while working in the fields.

857 [526] [834] [872] 533 [535] [461] [796] [585] [765]

/80 cont./ their humble houses and subsistence level of living the people like to build beautiful churches with high steeples and decorate them /81/ with as many ikons and church bells they can. The people of Megali Vrisi not being satisfied with the structure of the present church have already quarried stone from the nearby hills for their future church structure. When the farmers were notified to offer personal work for the church they did it without complaint.

The people look up to the church as an institution which gives them hope and courage in times of disappointment and discouragement. Once a year a confession is made in the church in front of the ikons and the priest. People tell of their bad acts and forgive those that caused them trouble. All wedding ceremonies, baptisms and name day celebrations take place in the church.

Attendance. Women and children attend the church regularly. The men are rather irregular in their attendance. This is not due to their negligence nor to their failure to respect the church, but is due to the long church services that last for three hours. The people get tired of going to the church. Most attend the last part of the services. In spite of the variety of music and ceremonial activities, the church is losing /82/ attendance. Men like to know what they hear in the church, and since it is all abstract to them they prefer to stay out and send their wives and children.

With the increase of modern scientific beliefs by the farmers, the church will be forced to change its course and adopt itself to the new social changes.

The membership is obligatory. Every one born in the village becomes a member. It is not necessary to keep in books the names of the members since the whole population of the village naturally belongs to the church.

Contributions. Every family has to contribute for the support of the priest and for the upkeep of the church. This contribution is paid in kind. Besides this the church has voluntary donations by people whose prayers are answered, and by others for the

/96 cont./

Local Holidays. The Greek Orthodox Church has more saint days than the calendar of the year could take care of. The church calendar used to provide more than half of the days of the year as observable holidays which naturally provided more leisure time for the people. More leisure time meant more churches, more spending and more monasteries. With the advance of the materialistic civilization these holidays have been greatly reduced, but still there are 94 church holidays for the farmer to observe besides Sundays and the national holidays. These holidays provide ample leisure time /97/ for the farmers to drink and dance. The village musicians get out on the village square and call out those that celebrate their name days. One by one the big circle is formed in the village square. If the Greek Orthodox Church has nothing to serve to the people by building up their religious beliefs, it has enough holidays to relieve the people from life's struggle. Megali Vrisi celebrates St. Nicholas day as its village holiday. This is the day when every corner of every house is scrubbed and cleaned. The village yards are well cleaned. The church committee prepares a special program featuring certain events. Prizes are given to the best wrestlers and to the best dancers. These events draw a large crowd from the neighboring villages. On this special day the livestock of the church is sold in auction. People donate to the church either poultry, calves, sheep, lambs, or goats for the dreams they dreamed about the saint of the church or the help they received from the church when they prayed. These can be considered as sacrifices which people make to the church. The church committee sells the livestock on this occasion. This custom is very similar to that of the primitive peoples of worshiping their gods by sacrifices.

/98/ The holiday has the following effects on the peoples:

1. Gives them a chance to clean up their houses.
2. Makes them hospitable for they have to take care of the visitors.
3. The day they forgive each other and forget the old grievances.

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4. The spirit of benevolence reaches its zenith. Donations to the church and to the poor. 571
5. Exchange of ideas with other villagers and thus benefit from each other's experience.
6. It is a day when everybody feels alike with no class distinction.

How local services are paid. There are three coffee houses in the village and they all work on a credit system to be collected in the summer. During the harvest season it is surprising to find more outside people with sacks and scales who come around to collect the debts than farmers. 452 [275]

/99/ The horseshoer, the herdsman, the barber, the priest, the school-committee, the tailor, the local hospital committee, the coffee house men, the local grocery merchant, the town merchants, the blacksmith, the tin man, the carpenter, the doctor, the drug man, the mid-wife, the guard of the fields, the vegetable man, the wagon builder, the cheese man and the tax collector. Usually at the harvest season the coffee houses are filled with collectors. They get information from each other to the quality of wheat collected from different farmers. Most of the agreements are based on an amount of wheat and not on money as a basis. For example, the barber for hair cutting and shaving gets 12 okes of wheat (33.60 lbs) for one year. The herdsman charges 3 okes of wheat per head for the year. The doctor gets 10 okes of wheat per family for the year. It is surprising here to find how much of the business transaction are carried out on commodity bases rather than with money. [463] [275] 452 436 465 437

Cast of Personalities. In the social interaction which takes place in a community, certain personalities emerge which develop into the community's cast of actors. These are the people who provide the /100/ foci of attention, about whom gossip circulates more than others, and who give to the community its really human qualities. Among these characters are both the heroes and the villains. They are outstanding, however, not so much because 156 554 [521]

They worked at their own shoeshine booths, or their own fruit-stands or restaurants; they took on unfamiliar occupations such as cooking, rather than submit to an employer.

TIME

Greeks "pass" the time; they do not save or accumulate or use it. And they are intent on passing the time, not on budgeting it. Although city people say that this picture is changing, that they are now made aware of the need to use time, the attitude is still widely prevalent, even in the area of private life among the urban groups.

The clock is not master of the Greek: it does not tell him to get up, to go to the field. In most villages, in spite of recent changes, the peasants still get up at sunrise or dawn to go to the fields, and return at sundown. The day is made for work. At night women visit and gossip; men join them or go to the coffee house; there is story-telling, and ardent political discussion; and as for any work done after dark, "the day takes a look at it and laughs". Wherever there is no law to the contrary, a man opens his store in due course, not by the clock; however, in the cities he now functions under clocked time because he comes under government and union regulations. Even in the United States, though conservative Greek business men have adapted their business life to the time of the clock, in their private life and at social gatherings they function irrespective of the clock.

It is distasteful to Greeks to organize their activities according to external limits; they are therefore either early or late, if a time is set at all. At church the people are not impatient while waiting for Mass to begin; and the church fills only gradually. They know when to go to church; yet when a foreign visitor inquires as to the time of a certain Mass, the subject creates a discussion; and eventually the answer will be something like: "Between 2 and 3." And when Greeks who follow their traditional ways invite, they say, not: "Come at 7 o'clock," but: "Come and see us." To arrive to dinner on time is an insult, as if you came just for the food. You come to visit, and the dinner eventually appears. Among urbanized Greeks, this custom now seems burdensome, and there are many cartoons on the subject.

The dinner is not planned to appear at a predetermined time; and the housewife does not cook by the clock. She tells by the smell or the consistency, or the colour, or the resistance against the stirring spoon; or the passing of time is gauged by the intervening activities. Conservative Greek women in the United States, even after a residence of many years, banish from the kitchen the interfering clocks which are introduced by their American grandchildren. Greek men and women work expeditiously, as a rule, but do this best at their own rhythm; any need to hurry is external and interfering; it introduces

10: Lee E,I-4,5 (no date) 1953
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THE FAMILY UNIT AND ITS EXTENSIONS

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I do not envy others for their vineyards and their gardens,
I envy only those who can stay in one place
And most I envy those who have brothers and first cousins
To grieve with them and rejoice with them
And to help each other when anything befalls.
(Cretan folksong)

Greek society starts with the family, and is patterned on it. It extends outward from it. A child is born into a group and remains part of the group through no effort of its own, through no attempt to please. Work and play, eating, conversation, celebration, are all in terms of this unit, and are the way in which belongingness is taken on and reaffirmed. Wider contacts come through the family and its extensions. A child's friends are the family friends and their children, and the relatives. He goes visiting and to social gatherings with the family, 594 by day or by night, though pediatricians protest against the latter [855 practice. He goes to church with the family, attending the regular [852 liturgy, not a Sunday school for children. Even when great religious [946] ceremonial occasions come late at night, such as the Mass of the Epitaph on Good Friday night, and the Mass of the Rising of Christ at midnight, the children are present. Except where foreign customs [527] have been taken over, a Greek child does not celebrate his birthday. [177] What is celebrated is the day of the saint after whom the child is named, and it is his family who celebrate. Old and young come to congratulate the family, and to wish that it shall enjoy the child for many years. The family, containing the child, is the focus, not the child himself.

The Greek family is family-oriented. It makes room for the child, 594 and the mother expects to spend much time nursing the child, expects 855 her cooking to be slowed down because of the constant presence and participation of the child. On the other hand, the child is not the focus, and the rhythm of activities does not change with the coming of the child. There are no special mealtimes for the child, neither are [264] the family mealtimes shifted to accommodate its needs. If the father [527] leaves the fields or closes his store on the child's nameday, it is because the *family* is celebrating. The child in the family is neither outstanding nor disruptive; but he is important, since he is accorded a definite place within the structured family.

In a Greek family the members spend much time together. The 594 children learn to enjoy being with the adults, and to listen to their [521] conversation, which is not trimmed down to meet the children's interests. In the village, a house often consists of only one room, [342] so there is no physical privacy; and even when there are more rooms for summer living, the winter room is one. And shared living is [156] prized. There is no craving for aloneness, although aloneness is

really Greek, since they do not conform to the tradition of Greekness.

Religion permeates Greek life, punctuating it with ritual. No Greek, urban or rural, would think of initiating anything important without a religious inauguration. Schools open with the inaugurative *agiasmos*, "making holy"; the foundation stone of every house is laid with *agiasmos*; merchants begin new undertakings with the proper religious inauguration. On Epiphany, the sea is made holy for those who journey on it. In the country, blessed water is carried from the Epiphany Mass to sprinkle on the fields. The Virgin and the Saints are invoked, but not mainly as correctives; their main function is to endow an undertaking with good and success, it is not primarily to prevent or correct. When a loved man, husband, son, brother, father, beloved, goes away with the merchant marine, or in the sponge-fishery, a woman makes a vow to the appropriate saint, to be fulfilled on the safe return. The islands are studded with small chapels which were promised on such occasions. However, priests are called in, and Saints and the Virgin invoked, also, when difficulties arise. Vows are made for the recovery of a loved one; the priest is called when the family has had a run of misfortune, to "make holy" and exorcise the evil. Priests conduct a rain litany to break a drought.

Traditionally, Sunday services are attended regularly by women and children, perhaps less faithfully by the men. Ceremonials, however, draw the entire family. The ritual is not bolstered by strict limits of time or rules of silence. Mass starts in due course, a little early or a little late, not on the dot of an appointed time. Children run in and out between the aisles, and mothers whisper endearments to babies. A woman will break into a dirge during the Good Friday Mass of the Epitaph, mourning the death of Christ, or adressing herself in sympathy to the bereaved Virgin. The Mass before the midnight preceding Easter is tense with expectation; there is great release and spontaneous joy when Christ is announced to be risen, and the "Christ is risen!" with which all are greeted is a true, joyous message, full of the wonder and the reassurance of the renewed miracle; the candles lighted from the sacred light at this time are carried home with true concern for saving the flame from extinction.

Religion is so firmly entrenched and unquestioned that it can be taken with casualness and a lack of self-conscious effort. It is accepted and ever-present like the air. One talks about Masses and preparations for litanies, but not about religion. Religion is not a personal matter, nor is it a guide to conduct. People consult the priest, but in matters of human relations, or, at any rate, relations which are regarded as secular, not because they are assailed by doubts. Young men do not talk about the meaning of Christ in their lives, nor do young girls dream of entering a convent. On the other hand, the Saints and the Virgin often figure in speech: a man singing of his beloved likens her neck to an altar, her arms to church tapers, or he tells her that he worships her like the Virgin.

262 much below that of the provinces, even at a time when the villages
369 were suffering from the depravations of the civil war.

Lent does not affect nutrition significantly. Where olive-oil is not
262 allowed, olives are; where fish is not allowed, fish roe is. In the pro-
785 vinces, not much meat is eaten, even before Lent; in the cities many
796 of the people fast only on a few of the important days of Lent. How-
ever, now that mothers have been taught the importance of giving their children daily milk, Lent does have an effect in this area; milk is forbidden during Lent, and children have to fast at least during the
[197] latter part. Unicef has made successful efforts to persuade mothers to give their children milk during this period. It achieved this with the co-operation of bishops who drank milk during Lent to show mothers that, if the cause was good, it was not a sin to drink milk; only one archimandrite refused to do so, afraid to take on the responsibility of possibly leading the people astray.

262 Greek holidays each have their appropriate food. It is essential
511 for the welfare, the religion, for the Greekness of the people, to have this food at that time. At a time when the Bureau of Welfare was set
[196] up to function only during emergency, it offered funds for the indigent at holidays for the purchase of the indispensable festive foods. If Greeks have any money to spend at such a time, these foods have a priority over everything else.

ATTITUDES UNDERLYING ACCEPTANCE OF CHANGE

178 Greeks do not place a value on unlimited progress; what they want
185 is the better than the present, or than the known. Modern Greek has
[196] lost the superlative of ancient Greek. To express *the best*, one now says, *the better of all the others*. And this expresses what is actually wanted. The American says, "the sky's the limit", but the Greek wants to reach the ceiling instead, something that he can touch and know ahead of time. The rest is a dream; he speculates about it as he speculates about what he would do if he were President of the United States; and he uses the subjunctive, not the future.

In this way, the attitude toward change is related to the place of the plan in Greek life. On the one hand, that which is a plan to an American, organizing and inciting to action, is a dream to the Greek, leading to quiescence or to oratory. The Greek mother of an American adolescent is shocked to hear her daughter express as plans, in the future tense, what she herself expressed in the subjunctive of the dream. Plans introducing agricultural and other change are formulated by foreign or foreign-trained technicians who say: "When I get to be . . . I shall do . . ." for people who say: "If I were . . . I would do"; there is a chasm between these two views of life.

On the other hand, the plan based on the non-experienced, on